

MACLEANS

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West Nile, mad cow, Asian
carp—a survival guide

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Hello, he must be going

The PM wants a dignified exit from politics. But his era seems already over.

I TALKED TO A FRIEND recently who's been puzzling over the battle between Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin. Why, he wondered, wouldn't Martin just leave the Liberals—and the media—behind, and take the soon-to-be vacant leadership of the Progressive Conservatives? After all, the parties are close ideologically on many issues, and Martin—who would bring the Tories' anachronistic credibility—could then take on the PM in a general election in which all voters, not just Liberals, could decide between the two.

That scenario seems logical to people who don't follow politics like my friend and many other Canadians—and surely improbable to those who do. Political parties are, at least in theory, supposed to accommodate people with like-minded beliefs—but in practice, their success often rests much more on personality issues than policy. That's why the Liberal caucus includes, among others, at least one former sewerage engineer (Montreal-area MP Yves Charbonneau), six former Tories (four from Quebec, one from Alberta, one from Newfoundland) and a former MDOR (Lib. Lakshmi from Saskatchewan). The Liberals are generally open to anyone who, whether "T" (them) or not, is open to being a Liberal.

In the mid-1990s—after the Liberals' fall from power—I interviewed a renowned political strategist who said their problem was that "they're stuck in the middle and don't stand for anything." After the Liberals won in 1993, the same guy said no, suddenly, that success was due to their "ability to straddle the middle, and be flexible in their thinking." Like, say, the analyst himself.

Liberals tend to believe in almost any reasonable policy that will keep them in power—and if that sounds cynical, it's only partly so. Even that way Business routinely change their operating structures and reason statements, and are then praised for keeping up with the times, and wroo-

ming changing votes. The same is true of many other things, ranging from taxes in food to fashion to, for that matter, the way a magazine is put together, so why should it's that apply to politics?

At the same time, even as policy stances can be fuzzy, the unwritten rules governing partisan politics are often rigid. There are a surprising number of close friendships between MPs in competing parties, largely because they don't usually compete personally against each other, so they focus on shared experiences rather than their differences. Some of the most vicious fighting is within parties—such as we're seeing now. If you're a Martin or Chrétien supporter, their battle is about more than the respective futures of those two men—it's as much about what happens to followers, in terms of things like future cabinet appointments, government jobs and access to the inner circle.

Remarkably, the PM and his supporters—with all the tools of government that they often previously used for partisan purposes—appear to have been so flummoxed. The debate is no longer about whether the PM will leave before the next election—but rather, how quickly. Even his supporters these days, like long-time maverick Mitchell Sharp, say that all he needs is a chance to leave with dignity. The problem, as Winston Churchill once said, is that "I know of no one where a man added to his dignity by sounding on it." There may still be time and a way to achieve the PM's wish—but as a profession so reliant on perception and propaganda, the Chrétien era is already seen over.

Anthony Wilson-Smith

MACLEAN'S

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"Of course seniors have the same desires as anyone else and to think otherwise is ludicrous. Human needs are there from birth until death." —**CHERYL HANCOCK, Toronto, ON**

Love in the golden years

In today's climate with its emphasis on youth, it was refreshing to read your article "Old Flames" (Cover, Aug. 12). It invites us to look on seniors as active, robust and interested in pursuing a vital sex life, or at least companionship, with the opposite sex. More power to them in their quest for a partner, whether it's marriage or companionship they seek.

Rosalee Jones, London, Ont.

During my 85-year tenure in my Bermuda postbox, many women have become widows, including myself in 1991. When I suddenly inquired of them if they would consider re-marrying, with startled eye-rolling and violent head-shaking, one and all they politely decline the trust. They are most unwilling to stake their heads in the royal one more time. This goes for the ladies of course—the men are all anxious to find another mate under the bedsheet, and not necessarily in that order.

Mary C. Woodland, Vancouver

Well, we always knew that they were the great old grandpa's. As for my own 67-year-old men, after divorcing three husbands and acquiring a new passion, she's still in the game. And less her far if it's good to know that, however old the bear, there's still some steam left in the engine. Now, I have a reason to look forward to retirement. Thank you for my uplifting article.

Tracy J. Anderson, Toronto

What beautiful pictures depicting elderly lovers in your cover story. Love in the golden years? Absolutely! However, I'm dismayed by the exclusion of an adult-on-adult affair in the article. It's not cute just because the people involved are seniors. There is a reason we are told "show don't tell." Adultery fuels endowments and can destroy families. Regardless of the ages of the participants, adultery means playing with fire.

Linda Carlsberg, Brampton, Ont.



Something in the way she died

I just finished reading "The day I killed Noodle" (Over to You, Aug. 12). I'm still shocked and saddened. I understand that Dr. Bernstein was trying to do the right thing by putting down his beloved pet, but I totally disagree with him because to do it himself—especially when his own brother-in-law is a vet. There is no reason this dog had to be drugged, put in a garbage bag, poisoned and cremated. A vet can ensure that an animal's death is quick and painless. I hope that making a full confession has eased Dr. Bernstein's mind because it has left a scar on mine.

Sara Winstanley, Calgary

After reading Dr. Bernstein's account of euthanizing Noodle, the Lakeland terrier, I dropped back on the cover to make sure I was reading Maclean's, not *The Sun*. *Forbes*. There I located the origins for a renowned disclaimer to the effect that this was fiction. Alas, it seems to be a true story. I was dumbstruck. Reusing a car engine for the purpose of euthanizing a beloved Noodle, wrapped in a green garbage bag. Only the omission of any reference to duct tape kept my supper down.

Keith Jackson, Ontario, Ont.

It took me a long time to finish reading Mark Bernstein's article as I had to keep putting it down—I couldn't see through my eyes filled with tears. Even as I sit here and write this, I find it hard to stop crying. I respect Mark for doing what he did, and I believe Noodle would thank him for being with him until the end. I am the owner of a beautiful golden retriever who, in my eyes, is as human as we are. When the time comes, I know I will think of Mark and Noodle.

Barbara Burns, Ottawa, Ont.

I dropped my beloved dog Darcy off at the vet's to end her days—and the guilt is still with me. Now my old cat is suffering, and I now have the courage to end his life with the dignity and love that Mark Bernstein used with Noodle.

Deanne Reiber, Ottawa

What's a million?

While there may not have been as much of an outpouring of anger as Mary Jaung's would like over Mr. Christie's remarks concerning the missing millions ("Let us never forget," Column, Aug. 12), that doesn't stop the gripping new old war cooler. If Mr. Christie should decide to run again (heaven forbid), he will pay a price for his chauvinist view of the public purse.

Fran O'Brien, Woodbridge, Ont.

Mary Jaung calculates that it would take one year's taxes from 325 taxpayers to pay for the money that the Prime Minister dismisses as inconsequential in Sponsorship. Look at it another way: All the income tax paid by myself, my parents, my wife and her parents for our entire lives has been stolen by Christie's crooked Quebec friends. Western internet? Gee, I wonder why.

Jon J. Cameron, Woodbridge, Ont.

A mighty fall

Didn't Hydro One's dismissed CEO Glenor Clithero know that when you reach the top of a "mountain" there is a very long drop facing you ("Is it a man's world?" Column, Aug. 12)? This senior's upset at having to pay debt reduction to Hydro One for her greed? May her fall not be cushioned by our savings.

John M. Nivelt, Iroquois, Ont.

THEMAIL

Middle-eastern solitudes

Is Israel doing all it can to ensure a nation of homeland for the Palestinians? Is the Palestinian authority doing all it can to ensure Israel that such a state can be a peaceful neighbour? Is U.S. involvement in the region motivated by a concern for justice and world peace, or crass national interest? It will take sincere and creative voices to break through the current gangster in the Middle East post process. Judy Rebick is one such voice ("Beneath the veil," Middle East, July 28).

Bobby Brack, Toronto

When Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat turned his back on a peace agreement that met nearly every Palestinian demand and embarked on two years of terrorism, it killed what had been a large and real Israeli peace movement. Fearing they were under siege, the Israelis turned to Ariel Sharon—an extremist out as far to the Israeli right as Judy Rebick is to the Canadian left—and everything fell apart. Unfortunately, understanding and peace will never be possible in the Middle East if the unceasing, financial voices of Sharon, Arafat and Rebeck are the only ones we hear.

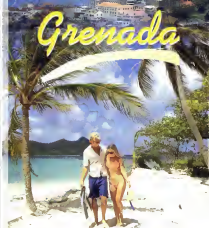
Tam Skagell, San Diego, Calif.

I am a Canadian living in an Arabic country and Judy Rebick's article is the most balanced and accurate assessment of the situation that I have read. I hope her words reach the people who have the power to effect change in the region.

Glen Griffin, Aliso Viejo, Calif.

In 2000, I spent a year in Israel, working on a kibbutz, then studying at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. I have remained in contact ever since. At least still now. Today, Israel has changed. No longer hero is, instead we have a brutally efficient modern military machine managed by a coalition of political interests that have the expansion of settlements and the containment and suppression of the Palestinians as primary goals. This perception of the Israeli government is consciously shared by many, including good friends of Israel—and should not be confused with anti-Semitism.

Hugh Faulkner, Vancouver, British Columbia



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THE MAIL

The meaning of marriage

Marriage is a sacred institution. This is why a civil ceremony is not enough for gay and lesbian wedding guests' greater recognition of their *lifetime choices*. ("It's about love," Q&A, Aug. 12). They too want religious sanctification. However, homosexual marriage is a political tool to not allow, it is a politically motivated action against God-making people and organizations that cannot accept values contrary to their sacred beliefs. It is a strong arm attempt to get government and judiciary to impose upon the Church against its conscience and teaching values that are abhorrent to it. Co-opting a legitimate religious tradition and the use of a non-gate price and devout congregation do nothing to render the civil marriage acceptable, since that which is not a marriage is not made one by those who have no authority to proclaim it as so. A court decision does not change the meaning of an institution that the court does not own, since it really will always be determined by those who own it, not those who attempt on it. The Church will never yield marriage to those who would pervert it and will never recognize a so-called marriage that violates its sacred precepts. Marriage belongs to God. He is its author.

Rev. Andrew R. McDonald, St. Mary's Catholic Church, Mississauga, Ont.

A dangerous action

In the Aug. 12 Editor's Letter, you say, "Kashner...which the British ruled until 1947." The British never ruled Kashmir. It was ruled by Maharaja Hari Singh who did not oppose the British, so they let him and members of his advisory council, some of whom were Muslims, rule Kashmir. If Kashmir becomes an independent country, it will be a haven for anti-western Islamic groups who, even now, are carrying out terrorist acts against India. Even Pakistan does not want an independent Kashmir.

Sander Hanig, Vancouver

Coercing the giants

It is about time Ottawa stuck it to the big five auto manufacturers to force the most over-pollution and wasteful vehicle energy systems ("Powering a Canadian coast," Pelham, Aug. 12). Having both Canada and California enforcing strict energy and pollution controls on all new vehicles will finally force the North American (and Japanese) auto manufacturers to get moving on the development of fuel-efficient energy vehicles and make auto using alternative energy sources such as natural gas, wind and solar power (electricity). With the development of fuel-efficient 30% and dual-powered light trucks, Detroit has gone back to the bad habits of the 1960s.

Bob Toppet, Keweenaw, Ontario

I rejoice along with all gay and straight couples and individuals alike regarding the recently achieved legality of same-sex marriage in Ontario, and I am equally saddened and outraged by the inability of the federal government to implement equal marriage. However, I would like to question the necessity of gay marriage, as well as the legitimacy of marriage itself. The Canadian bureaucratic system (and in deed that of our entire society) is created around the assumption that people come as pairs, with various benefits and tax breaks for two-person families. While I agree that couples of any sex should be given full recognition and protection under the law, I have always been wary of the notion that same-sex couples should have to somehow appear to or prove themselves worthy of belonging to such an exclusive heterosexual construct.

Jim Rennie, Vancouver

would provide a market-driven move toward more expensive renewable energy sources and a concomitant decrease in greenhouse gas emissions.

Peter Scholten, Burlington, Ont.

In the eye of the beholder

It appears that Donald Cook has been named as the media's paragon of behavior ("The naked emperor," Collins, Aug. 12). To brand Alan Greenspan as "irresponsible" is ludicrous. This time, the bubble was much greater than the one that got the 1987 crash. Anybody who could read Greenspan's mind (without subtitles) would have recognized his "irrational exuberance" as a clear warning, which it was. Nobody was in the mood for looking. In retrospect, the news media, aided by corporate scandals, overestimated the resilience in the stock market to such an extent that one would think a depression was under way. This is where the so-called financial "experts" (including the author of this column) failed to see the disconnect between the behavior of the stock market and the economy. We know now, technically speaking, that the U.S. is in a recession, but probably the mildest in 30 years. Six months from now, even the Monday morning quarterbacks might wonder what this pansy regarding the economy was all about. In my opinion, Alan Greenspan is quite relevant.

Andre B. Phillips, London, Ont.

Strong words

Richard Patten writes well on combining stronger federal action from the fiscal autonomy of the provinces ("A permanent fix," Rupp, Aug. 12). Terran's don't hate Americans because they're Christian, or because they're not Muslim. There are lots of Christian countries that Arabs are not attacking. Like Canada. Arabs hate Americans because they interfere. They despise democracy they don't approve of. They despise countries they find threatening. They support Israel's strife with the Palestinians. There's no need to be "500 additional counter-terrorism intelligence analysts." If the Americans stop pulling their (subtle) excellent Christian and democratic ideas onto other countries, terrorism in the U.S.A. will cease.

Tony Gier, Dallas, Ont.





Bleking the bank

Sink, Nick Lysyk had exposure can such in his 30007 and Mercedes. His neighborhood is an upscale Edmonton neighborhood just that was about all they knew about Lysyk, whom they describe as a quiet guy. Police, however, say he was operating a scam from a small branch of the Bank of Montreal which he managed just a few blocks from his home, and may have stolen \$15.7 million. The 51-year-old banker allegedly stole the money over a six-year period by creating accounts for phantom customers, granting them loans and then withdrawing the money.

Coating public opinion

Shouting the "uprising will be victorious," Palestinian activist leader Marwan Barghout was led into an Israeli court. There, he was charged with murder and with belonging to the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, a militant offshoot of Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement which has claimed responsibility for numerous suicide attacks against Israel. Judge Tzvi Garfinkel, saying he could not permit the court to "turn into a political stage," ordered Barghout, 41, remanded. But before he was led out, the self-described "peaceful man" gestured excitedly and shouted

to reporters in Hebrew, Arabic and English that Israelis could only have victory after withdrawing from Palestinian lands. It's clear Barghout intends to use the courtroom as a platform to denounce Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.

Diabetes on the increase

The number of Canadians with diabetes rose by one-third between 1995 and 1999, according to a study by the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences. Researchers claim that one of the main reasons for the increase is that people are living longer with the disease. The study included those with Type 1 diabetes, which is also known as juvenile diabetes, and Type 2 diabetes, which accounts for almost 95 per cent of cases and affects people who are sedentary, overweight, have high blood pressure or high cholesterol. More than two million Canadians suffer from diabetes, which can lead to heart disease, kidney failure, blindness and amputation. That number is expected to grow to three million during the next decade.

Clitheroe fights back

A month after her high-profile firing, former Hydro One, Inc. chief executive of-

ficer Eleanor Clitheroe launched a lawsuit against the utility, seeking money she alleges it still owes to her. Although the suit does not specify a dollar amount, Clitheroe's severance could amount to as much as \$6.6 million and her pension \$79 million. She was fired on July 79 after the Ontario government objected to what it considered her overly high salary and excessive perks. Clitheroe is also seeking \$5 million in damages for slander, claiming all her spending was done with the approval of the chairman of the board or the chief officer.

Highway maintenance

A dangerous stretch of the Trans-Canada Highway will get a facelift thanks to a \$400-million joint initiative between Ontario and the New Brunswick government. Jean Chrétien promised to pay for half of the five-year project, but initially pledged only \$135 million from money set aside for infrastructure spending (the rest will come in a future budget). The project will expand a currently two-lane 136-km stretch of a divided highway, running from the Quebec border to Fredericton, into a four-lane divided highway.

Farmers stand their ground

Dozens of white farmers in Zimbabwe were arrested after refusing to comply with President Robert Mugabe's Aug. 8 deadline to leave their farms. About two-thirds of the 3,000 farmers stayed on their property, many saying the eviction notice violates their constitutional rights. Black militants evicted one white farmer after seizing his property north of the capital, Harare. Despite domestic and international criticism, Mugabe vowed to push ahead with his land campaign.

A coroner's review for Randall

Ontario's Office of the Chief Coroner announced it will launch an independent review into the vicious beating death of seven-year-old Itanelli Dooley. The boy died on Sept. 25, 1998, as the result of a horrifying case of child abuse. His parents, father Gary Dooley, 36, and stepmother Miriam Dooley, 32, were found guilty of second-degree murder in April. Both are launching an appeal. Instead of an inquest—which would have to wait until the matter was no longer before the court—the

Health | Tobacco companies to anti-smokers: Butt out

American tobacco companies used their corporate muscle to bully pharmaceutical companies they did business with in the 1990s and '80s. A study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* reported that the companies threatened to pull their business from pharmaceutical companies that were selling products to curb smoking, such as nicotine patches, or were conducting anti-smoking campaigns. The study focused on tobacco giant Philip Morris. It claimed that in 1988 the New York City-based company put pressure on a subsidiary of Dow Chemical, the manufacturer of Nicorette gum. Philip Morris, a major purchaser of Dow's agricultural chemical products, threatened to pull out of the Nicorette advertising was toned down. Similarly, in 1995 Philip Morris was able to stop Ciba-Geigy's advertising campaign for Valerid nicotine patches, claiming the ads lobbied "anti-tobacco." Lane Davis, a professor of clinical pharmacology at the University of California



Everyone's undermining the competition.

at San Francisco and one of the authors of the study, said the research "shows how the industry has used its financial might to thwart public health." The researchers get their information from 187 internal documents obtained from Philip Morris and other major cigarette manufacturers, which were forced to make them public as part of the terms of litigation settlements in the United States.

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THEWEEK



Airlines | Still no liftoff

It's been almost a year since the World Trade Center collapsed after being torched by two hijacked passenger jets. Now the economic slowdown and the American public's continued reluctance to take to the sky in the wake of the terrorist attacks are reshaping havoc on the U.S. airline industry. On Aug. 11, seventh-ranked US Airways Group Inc. filed for bankruptcy protection. Two days later, American Airlines Corp., the country's largest carrier, announced it was dramatically scaling back operations and would slash 7,000 jobs. Then, Delta Corp., parent company of the second-largest carrier, United Airlines, said it would file for bankruptcy this fall if costs are not cut dramatically.

The U.S. airline industry racked up nearly \$58.1 billion in losses in 2001, and a major reorganization is expected as it consolidates. United alone, which lost \$20 million in the last quarter, has asked the federal govern-

ment for \$1.5 billion in loan guarantees.

But analysts say it's unlikely Washington will agree to such measures if the airline doesn't reach major cost-cutting deals with its employees. United's problems could also affect Air Canada. The two airlines are founding partners of the Star Alliance, a marketing agreement among 14 airlines that generates \$700 million a year for Air Canada through revenue sharing. So far, United has not cancelled any bookings with Air Canada—which says it's healthy. Layoffs at the Canadian carrier, combined with other cost-cutting measures and fleet changes, have already helped counterbalance the weak demand for travel. In fact, spokesmen said Air Canada was the only international airline in North America to post a profit in the second quarter, and urged customers to continue to book flights. "For us, it's business as usual," said Air Canada spokeswoman Isabelle Arthur.

review "will focus mainly on areas not covered in detail by the criminal trial," the coroner's office said. During the conclusion of three-month trial, the jury heard that Bessie received 13 rib fractures, a lacerated liver, a crushed adrenal gland and brain injuries.

Liberal pickticking gears up

Things are heating up within the Liberal party as both the Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin camps prepare for the leadership election in February. Although former cabinet minister and long-time Chrétien ally Michael Sherry leaned that the Prime Minister was looking for an easy exit, things looked daunting of the sort by week's end. Roy Christen arranged had prepared a plan that included new policies, a budget and another cabinet shuffle in early this fall, while Martin's staff prepared their own strategy for the four day summer

vacation meeting planned for this week in Greenboro, Que. It will be the first time the caucus is together since the House adjourned in June.

His shorts in a twist

As part of a massive two-year undercover operation—code-named Bermuda Short—German police nabbed Canadian model broker Mark Valentine at the Frankfurt airport. The former chairman of Toronto brokerage firm Thorburn, Knapp & Co. was charged with conspiracy to commit wire, mail and securities fraud. The case involves three companies in which Valentine is alleged to have controlled a majority of the shares. Valentine became a major player on Bay Street during the Internet stock boom, after being hired in 1994 at the age of 24. Along with Valentine, 57 others were charged as part of the globalizing.

Passages

RECOVERING While many will cite Jason Priestley's Aug. 11 race car crash as an example of an intelligent actor's hobby gone wrong, competitors insist the Vancouver native is the real deal and expect him to make a swift return to the track. During a practice lap at the Kentucky Speedway in Sparta, Priestley lost control on a turn and crashed straight into a wall at 290 km/h. He suffered a moderate concussion and fractures in his spine and both feet. The former *Beverly Hills 90210* star was unconscious when he was airlifted to a hospital in Lexington—family and friends, including his girlfriend, British special effects technician Naama Lowde, arrived within hours. At the end of last week, Priestley, 32, had undergone surgery and was expected to make a full recovery. Last year, Priestley acted in a commercial for the Indy Racing League and has recently cut back on acting in order to compete.



3RD He'd only been on the job five months when he suffered a fatal heart attack Aug. 14, but Jim Thompson had already made his mark as CEO of the Canadian Olympic Committee. That says a lot. Past executives struggled to effect even modest changes to the politically unenviable COC, which organizes the country's Olympic teams. But the 60-year-old Thompson, who at different times promoted amateur sports TV coverage for CBC and TSN, took on his new post in March determined to transform the COC into "a high-performance organization." Toward that goal, the COC recently revamped its overly disbursed funding programs, instead directing the bulk of cash—\$4.6 billion in 2002—to top-ranked athletes and the most productive sports. The core money would go for leading competition better chances to win, he said, and their international success would build support back home for amateur sport among fans and sponsors alike. COC officials were devastated by Thompson's sudden death, but, and one, "He set our direction very clearly, and we're not turning back."



Boating | A family tragedy

The Cap Rogue II was a seamy fishing boat piloted by a veteran captain. As people gathered at a makeshift memorial outside a store at the south end of B.C.'s Galiano Island, they grieved and pondered a mystery: how could the Rogue have suddenly capsized, drowning five members of the same extended family? "It's a black day for Galiano," lamented Ken Markens, a resident of the island situated midway between Vancouver and Victoria in the Strait of Georgia. At the time of the accident, the Rogue, a 16.5 m sloop, was chugging through choppy seas in the strait, eight kilometers from the mouth of the Fraser River. Five of the seven people on board were killed. The captain, Ken Mabblesley, who survived,

lost his wife Kathy, 36, son Wyatt, 9, and daughter Amanda, 11, along with cousins Rodney Wilson, 40, and Tony Mead, 33, all of Galiano. Mead's father, Charlie, was the only other survivor.

The vessel was heading to a wharf near the mouth of the Fraser on the morning of Aug. 13 to unload salmon when it started taking on water. A passing inflatable notified rescue officials after the boat capsized; the crew of a B.C. ferry, en route from Vancouver Island to the mainland, pulled the two survivors to safety. Rescuers also found Wyatt near the overturned boat, but he died of cardiac arrest on the way to hospital. Navy divers flown to the scene recovered the bodies of three more victims. At the time there was hope that Amanda might have survived in an air pocket on the overturned boat. But when

despite heroic rescue efforts, five of seven relatives on the capsized fishing vessel died.

Divers were finally able to enter the Rogue nine hours later; they found her dead.

The Transportation Safety Board and the RCMP are investigating the incident, but a report on the cause is not expected for a year. The tragedy comes at a time when authorities have become increasingly concerned over the number of deaths in the fishing industry. Fifty-eight B.C. fishermen died between 1991 and 2001, last month, the Workers' Compensation Board of B.C. launched a campaign to draw attention to the high number of deadly accidents. It blames the problem on the infrequent or incorrect use of flotation devices and life jackets and says vessels often lack proper safety equipment.

DAVID CLARK/VANCOUVER NEWS-HOUSTON PHOTO



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ALL ABOARD!

Romance and convenience keep passenger trains on track



1967



1971



1979



1977



1993

THE FIRST TIME I rode a train I was nine, and my grandmother had just died. The second time I was 22 and had just quit my job as a newspaper reporter in Sydney, N.S. The third time, my new wife and I travelled west from Calgary for my first view of the majestic Rockies. To me, trains have always been wrapped up in big events; they're about much more than getting from point A to point B. Most people know from an early age that that hissing whistle signifies something extraordinary. In my case, I'm thinking of sometime in the early 1960s, when I was around seven, in a summer cottage far from home. Lying in the strange bed I heard my first locomotive whistling like a banshee out there in the Canadian darkness. It was scary, thrilling and melancholy, and it was the coolest noise—short of the theme music for *Hockey Night in Canada*—I'd ever heard.

Four decades later I'm sitting in a sleeper

car on VIA Rail Canada's Ocean train as it weaves through southeastern Quebec, feeling that same visceral thrill. It's an early summer night, similar to the one at the cottage long ago. But sleep still seems a couple of time zones away. That's partly the motion, midway between a rocking chair and a decent pocket of air turbulence. Mostly it's the anything-is-possible excitement of journeying. I'm a member of some menagerie leisure club, fleeing the mundane world of traffic jams, kids' soccer and putting out the garbage, liberated by a glittering steel projectile blasting into the darkness. Daylight may be when you witness the stunning Canadian vistas—the cliffs and rivers, poise and grace and mountains, grand cities and frozen-in-time towns that seep by outside the window like postcards. Give me a night train, though, gliding through the black when the only hint of humanity is the vast, largely unpopulated country in an un-

Old CPR ads, and the 60-year-old Ocean, testify to rail's place in Canadian history. Sopite Louise Poirand cars breakfast en route to Montreal.



known light glimmering in the distance.

Then you can feel like a late-19th-century emigrant from the Scottish Highlands getting ready to open up the Canadian West. Or a conductor on the British Columbia lone wolfing woodchuck Billy Miner, Canada's first train robber, will come swooping down at any moment. Or an ordinary private in the Princess Patricia going off to fight "over there" in the First World War. Or like you've just stepped into a song by Scorpions' Tim Connors, Hank Snow, Daniel Lanois—or Gordon Lightfoot—who, in 1967's *Canadian Railroad Trilogy*, set the standard for Canadian train songs: "Along on the workers and bring up the rails/Wo're gonna lay down the tracks and tear up the rails/Open 'er heart let the life blood flow/Gotta get on our way 'cause we're movin' too fast."

Every train has its share of passengers susceptible to nostalgia for the sort of faded, innocent past conjured up in Lightfoot's song. They're in the deepest and coziest cars, spiritualized among the phobias not scared to fly after Sept. 11 and the serene hush for the discount Moody, though, you'll find them up in the windowed dome cars, hotly talking, taking in the 180-degree views. That's where the real fans—the *foamers*, as it were—during the month, to use their own terms for the most hard-core rail nutting out. You'll know them by their bloodied-out expressions. That and the fact that they will be sitting there bright as day at children as 5:10 a.m., when the morning is just starting to dimple Quebec's Montserrat River.

Let's face it: anyone who'd rather spend 28 hours aboard a train than 15 hours at home to get to the same place for no discernible difference in fare is in the grip of some powerful attraction that goes far beyond practical considerations. A commuter with a rail line chaf? A smoker's lounge? A bar? Those things are nice, but some of those bells just like the train next retro style, or the way it actually works. Off to the rails, not the ultimate destination, is the point of the whole laid-back aesthetic. "If you want to be wowed by the great expanse of the land, then fly," declares Stephen Grier, 75, a retired professor of geontology who got on in Montreal, N.B. bound for Montreal. Grier and his wife, Eva, are sitting over coffee in

the dining car. "You want to see the country for what it is," he says, "ride the train."

Most serious train buffs have a sense of history. Probably they know Confederation would never have happened without the Canadian Pacific Railway—British Columbia refused to join unless a transcontinental line was built. Before the CPR's completion in 1885, Canada was a string of unconnected settlements separated by huge expanses of forest and prairie. The spirit and brio of the locomotive and the feat of the CPR civil engineers—the 94.2m-high bridge traversing Alberta's Oldman River, the eight-km tunnel through B.C.'s Selkirk Mountains—became a strong symbol of what this new country could accomplish.

The CPR tied the country together "like a line of steel from coast to coast," says Pierre Berton, author of *The National Dream* and *The Last Spike*. "Our cities and towns popped up along it like beads on a string. Without it we would have developed vertically rather than horizontally. We became the nation we are because of the railroad." But that was before two car families and long-haul jets could make it coast-to-coast without refueling. Just 12 years ago, VIA cut its passenger network in half, leaving the country encircled with overgrown rail lines and dotted with forlorn villages and ghost towns. In the process, the Crown corporation used more of its most crowd-pleasing assets, including the original Canadian Pacific route west from Calgary through Banff, Lake Louise and Rogers Pass (Private railroads immediately failed to fill the gap—since 1999 Rocky Mountaineer Railroad has run a ghost train along that route.)

There are no such strings left over the Ocean which, as Canada's longest-running passenger train, has been making the same 1,344-km Halifax-Montreal journey since 1904. But the view is still eye on the eye. You want nature? There are the gently rolling hills, the stretches of bright river, the stretches of soft-billed osprey, the beaver dams, and the deer standing still as statues in the edge of the forest. The Ocean run certainly lacks the breathtaking open spaces of Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta, where, far from, no human can be glimpsed. Yet there are, undoubtedly, places to be found in the remote car woods and ancient moldering cemeter-



ies, the foundations of long-abandoned farmhouses and quaking new subdivisions. And they pale against the steady panorama of real life that flickers by in the countryside and the small towns and villages that grew up out of necessity along the CPR line, grade-school kids stamping jubilantly on a wooden bridge, an old timer driving a jalopy that looks like it was new when that guy Thelma was just starting to tie her things up in Ottawa, a middle-aged couple hotly necking on the side of the road in broad daylight.

In parts of Quebec, the train passes so close to houses that it seems you could reach through the window and grab a glass of iced orange off someone's kitchen table. You won't get that absurd Air Canada Tango. Nor will you find yourself just outside of Sudville, N.B., watching a car-faced man walking near the rail line who looks remarkably like a special agent in Ocean Land, a punning that Wolfeville, N.S., train Alex Calville made in 1962 based on a character he used to see strolling near the same spot. "To me," Calville told Madson, "the train has always represented civilization and humanity."

Ride the train through still, otherworldly places like the Jacques River, N.B.,

and Snyburn, Que., and it's easy to see what Calville means—and that the train matters. Anyone who doubts that the rails continue to help bind the country together might want to visit Amherst, no longer one of Nova Scotia's premier industrial towns, where the original rail station, built with local rail sandstone in 1907, still bristles with activity. Or they might want to be aboard the Ocean as it pulls into Berthier, N.B., on the day the Grade 5 students from South Berthier Elementary School are making their annual pilgrimage to Magritte Hall and the other tourists in Moncton. "By train you see the same things," says Tummy Theobald, 11, "but guess it's in a new strange way."

Children are precisely susceptible to the magic. When he was a boy living in Sherbrooke, Que., where he attended the local school for the blind, singer and guitar virtuoso Jeff Healey had whistled feelings whenever the train rolled past his dormitory. "I guess it's about being young with an imagination," says Healey, 36, "and thinking about being on these trains, going somewhere but never really seeing where you are going to end up." Every mother or bluesman who has ever tried to capture the train's rhythm implicitly



The Ocean's dining car helps smooth a 28-hour trip; a quick bite before pulling into Montreal, Ralph Fraser heads home to Toronto

understands. "It's like a train as a living thing," declares Greg Lesko, 36, formerly of the Ocean 90s and now the first train for the local SwingSwing, who lives in a house along the rail line on the north side of Winnipeg. "The rhythm builds and builds and it's so magical that you could go anywhere with it."

Movie director like Alfred Hitchcock (*Strangers on a Train*, *North by Northwest*) have repeatedly used rail travel as a back drop for love and suspense. No one has to tell marketing whizzes what drives people to the rails. "The mood is sex," says the ads for VIA's "Romance by Rail" tour packages. "The journey means." That image is part of what got American Supreme Pilgrims hooked on trains At 42, she has an apartment in Manhattan, but most of the time she's travelling—wherever possible by train. At last count she's been a passenger on more than 100 rail lines around the world. Strife in her single moments as the Ocean idles at the Montreal station, she says she likes the "sense of constant movement," then adds, "Before AIDS, it was a lot different than it is now. Years ago on this train through Switzerland I met this conductor—he had thigh like marble." And now

she's bound for Halifax and eventually a ferry ride to Newfoundland, where she plans to see the puffins before returning to the mainland and grabbing another train out to British Columbia.

She volunteers this intimate information easily, with little prompting. That's not surprising. People tend to open up to strangers aboard trains. Perhaps it boils down to spending all that time together. Maybe it's the slow and easy rhythm. It could just be the sense of giddy anonymity that comes from travelling across the land like a passenger on a cruise ship. Whatever it is, something about a train predicts the soul. Not just for the reflex. Like kids on holiday were when one goes by. So do adults looking for teenage smoking cigarettes and restaurant workers taking off the apron.

For the people watching the Ocean chugging down the track, that whistle lets them know their world is somehow connected to the bigger one. For just a moment, wherever they live along the VIA line, they can see themselves on that silver train entering a realm of adventure and endless possibilities. That's exciting enough to make a person feel like a kid again. And, the over thing is, it doesn't even cost the price of a ticket.

RAIL REDUX

With new cars, renovated stations and a powerful friend in Ottawa, a resurgent VIA is rolling again

TRANSPORT MINISTER David Collier calls himself a train buff. As a boy growing up in a quiet town in England, he says the sights and sounds of London's Marylebone Station were an everyday fascination. "The coal trains used to march behind my bedroom window," he recalls. "I used to be a transporter." So Collierette takes special satisfaction in the way the railway job he has held since 1997 has let him become the biggest booster passenger rail has had in Ottawa in a long time. In spring 2000, Collierette persuaded Jean Chrétien and the rest of the cabinet to let him inject \$400 million over five years into VIA, Rail Canada's capital spending, allowing the government-owned railway to, among other things, buy smarter new cars and refurbish random stations.

Even with Collierette in charge at Transport Canada, though, the biggest dream of Canadian passenger rail proponents has been stalled. In 1998, a consortium of companies proposed a high-speed service for the country's busiest routes, the Montreal-Ottawa-Toronto corridor. But the estimated \$15-billion cost of upgrading tracks and buying new trains—

third of which the federal government would have had to pay—proved too much for the Liberals. The grand plan for bringing 320 km/h trains to Canada, comparable to France's famously fast TGVs and Germany's, or TGVs, never left the station.

But if truly high-speed trains will not be rolling in Canada anytime soon, high-speed rail is now a real possibility. Collierette said. Meanwhile he has asked VIA to develop a proposal before the end of this year for a service that would significantly cut travel times on those busy routes. "In my discussions with VIA, I've asked, 'What would it take to get faster trains without going the whole TGV route?'" Collierette said. The plan VIA is working on for Collierette would boost maximum speeds to 200-240 km/h from the current 160-170 km/h. That would shave about 45 minutes off the current two-hour trip from Ottawa to Montreal.

How much it would all cost is, of course, the critical question. Collierette said it's too early to put a firm figure on the project, but he allowed it would run to "many hundreds of millions." A rail industry official said \$2 billion is a reasonable

early estimate. Since VIA runs its trains mostly on tracks owned by CN Rail and CP Rail, those freight railway companies are closely involved in drafting the proposal. Collierette wants to put before cabinet. Much of the money would be spent straightening tracks, building bridges and tunnels, and making other improvements to let trains go faster and make fewer stops. New locomotives might also be needed. VIA's latest batch, delivered only last fall, hauls cars at maximum speeds of 177 km/h—well below the anticipated pace of the higher speed service.

The fact that Collierette can so easily discuss a huge injection of new spending on VIA is remarkable. For much of its history, the national passenger rail company's outlook has seemed uncertain at best. Cut and by Pierre Trudeau's government in 1978, VIA, by 1981, was cancelling routes to save money. When the Conservatives took power in 1984, many of those services were restored. But in early 1990, then-transport minister Blaine Hoguehead eliminated 16 of 38 routes. Among those dropped was the historic southern transcontinental route through Calgary, leaving only the northern

run through Edmonton. "They said that I was killing Canada," Hoguehead recalls. The outcry reflected not just practical concerns over lost service, but also the enduring symbolism of trains in a country both proud of the "natural dream" of coast-to-coast rail.

Twelve years later, Hoguehead's head-headed-on-curtain new look like it might have been VIA's salvation. The federal subsidy poured into its operating costs then stood at \$350 million; it now runs at about \$170 million a year. And VIA's management knows that outcry can't rise. The government still requires some money-losing routes to be maintained as a matter of policy, including service from Jasper, Alta., to Prince Rupert, B.C., and from Winnipeg to Churchill, Man. But by and large, VIA tries not to carry enough passengers to pay their way—especially when it comes to adding new services.

The contrast between thriving VIA and its troubled U.S. counterpart, Amtrak, is striking. Facing a financial crisis, Amtrak got US\$200 million in special funding from Congress last month to keep it running through the end of September. The union turned still. Breaker last week

train buff Collierette wants to see those passengers get to Montreal more quickly.

Amtrak was forced to suspend 30 per cent of its service—including all its new high speed trains—on its heavily travelled Boston New York-Washington corridor, after finding cracks in a composite meant to keep locomotives from swaying. (The locomotives are built in part by Montreal's Bombardier Corp.) Even before that setback, Amtrak's new president, David Gunn, the former head of the Toronto Transit Commission, was pleading for US\$1.2 billion from Washington in the next fiscal year, more than twice the previous year's subsidy. One personal problem: Amtrak has been forced to run money-losing, long-distance routes through key states to keep Congress from cutting off money. In other words, Washington still hasn't come to terms with the need to nationalize Amtrak in the way VIA was scaled back more than a decade ago.

Such cuts may not always be as unpopular as politicians fear. After weathering a two-week firestorm over the 1990 VIA cuts, Hoguehead says he rarely faced criticism

over the decision again. "People saw that we couldn't keep putting a huge subsidy into empty trains." As well, where there is real demand for rail service, new companies tend to pick up the slack when the big railways retreat. When it comes to tourist travel through some of Canada's best scenery, private railways from Rocky Mountaineer in the West to the Amtrak Railway Co. in the East have sprung up.

Between those regional railways and VIA's national network, passenger rail in Canada is hardly endangered. By the end of next year, VIA expects to have 139 plush new passenger cars in service to go with its 25 new locomotives. Stations from Montreal to Prince Rupert have been spruced up. But all this will seem like small comfort unless Canada can persuade cabinet to embrace—and fund—the vision of faster trains. For VIA, it would mark recovery from the days when passenger rail looked like a fading dream on the Canadian landscape. For Collierette, it would be a fitting occasion for the abiding affection for trains that began as a kid's bedroom near a noisy London yard. ■



SEDUCED BY THE ROCKIES

Riders from around the world love the western train



CONSIDER IT one long train. For over three hours after pulling out of Edmonton on a hot, dry summer's morning, we pass through the bush country as the train known as the Canadian slowly winds its way westward. The repetition can be numbing, especially for those who have already taken this same train across thousands of kilometers of wild country and prairie since departing Toronto. But about 100 km east of Jasper, the train begins to gain altitude, the trees start to thin and the fast-flowing Athabasca River comes into view. Then, like a courteous finally answering her charms, the train rounds a bend and the magnificent Rockies beckon. We're seduced.

But the best is yet to come. After an hour's status stop in Jasper, a former trading post the railway named into a tourist destination a century ago, the train begins its exquisite two-hour stretch teaking through the Yellowhead Pass and past snow-capped Mount Robson, at 3,954 meters the Rockies' highest peak. In glass-enclosed observation cars along the train, passengers crane their necks to take it all in. "Just gorgeous, beyond words really," says composer/producer Gordon Mumma, 67, a professor emeritus at the University of California who rides the

Three times a week, in both directions, the Canadian runs through spectacular scenery.

Canadian twice a year for pleasure with his Montreal-born wife, music professor Michelle Filice. "Oh wow!" says New Yorker Kate Thum, 31, gazing toward the jagged peaks. "It's awesome!"

For many, riding through the Rockies is the highlight of their transcontinental journey. The Canadian, which runs three times a week each way between Toronto and Vancouver, caters to higher-end travelers. During the May to October peak season, a full-day one-way ticket between Toronto and Vancouver, multi-course meals included, ranges from \$1,163 for an upper berth to \$1,750 for a private bed room. From Edmonton to the West Coast, one-way prices start at \$66. Meanwhile, the southern route through the mountains, abandoned to the private sector in 1996, is covered by Rocky Mountain Railroaders. Their fares for a two-day, all-daylight hours trip from Calgary through Banff to Vancouver start at \$760, including a night's hotel stay. Of course, if money's no object, travelers can always rent a three-car private train—on Hollywood director Francis Ford Coppola and George Lucas did in Toronto last week—

and take their families on a leisurely trip westward. Estimated cost to Vancouver, well in excess of \$350,000.

Not surprisingly, perhaps, the clientele on the Canadian is, well, rarely Canadian. On average, 70 per cent of the passengers in sleeper class are foreigners, mostly Americans. Others come from as far afield as Europe, Australia and Japan (the latter are especially big on the trip between Vancouver and Japan, sometimes pooping VIA to add extra cost). All in all, the Canadian is a cash cow, carrying four per cent of VIA's overall ridership while generating 21 per cent of annual revenue. While Americans, in particular, benefit from a favorable exchange rate, many on board say they simply could not get the same old experience in their own country. According to them, VIA's American equivalent, Amtrak, often suffers from spotty scheduling, mediocre service and abysmal food. British passengers tell similar stories of how service in their country has deteriorated since the railways were privatized in 1993.

While Canadians often complain train travel is an achingly slow way to cross the country, rail buffs down here from elsewhere say that makes the point. "If you're in a hurry, you shouldn't take the train," says Theodor B. Peterson, a 39-year-old from Des Moines, Iowa. Peterson, who has done the Toronto-Vancouver run twice annually since retiring 30 years ago from his insurance job, likes to plant himself in one of the many public areas. "I may not know a soul when I go on," he says, "but I've made a lot of new friends by the time I leave." Canadians on board often give a new appreciation for their country. "There's so much open space," enthuses Windsor resident Mary Ann Whelan, 58. "Out here, there's still room to breathe. I hope it stays that way."

Near Kamloops, attendants prepare the cars for the night, converting seats and overhead compartments into beds, and we crawl under the covers to be tucked gently to sleep. In the morning, I awaken near New Westminster, 15 minutes east of Vancouver. We've traded B.C. interior sunshine for coastal clouds, and mountain scenery for the sea and distant deltas that are the gateway to our major cities. Soon, the skyscrapers of Vancouver are in sight. The spell is broken. Until next time. **E**



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THE FLOOD OF AGES

Rivers rise to record highs, causing death and widespread destruction

FOR SEVERAL frantic days, thousands of emergency workers and volunteers piled up sandbags in hopes of protecting Prague from the rising waters of the now-swollen River Vltava. In addition to the lives at stake—some 50,000 residents were evacuated—the historic center of the Czech city, which many consider to be the most beautiful capital in Europe, was threatened. In the end, the flood, which officials described as the worst in the city's 800-year history, spared the 13th-century Old Town Square. Still the Vltava, which crested more 7.25 m above its normal

summer levels, spilled over the embankments into the medieval Mala Strana district beneath Hradcany Castle, once home to Habsburg kings.

Similar catastrophic scenarios were repeated throughout central and eastern Europe and Russia as two weeks of heavy rain unleashed massive flooding, especially along the Elbe (into which the Vltava flows), Mulde and Danube rivers and their tributaries. By week's end the rains were mostly over, but more than 100 people were dead. Hundreds of thousands were forced from their homes, including Aus-

trians, Slovaks and Germans, as well as Czechs. The torrents of water swept away crops, smashed infrastructure and centuries-old architectural sites, causing billions of euros in damage.

As residents of Prague started to clean up, others elsewhere prepared for the worst. In Dresden, an southeast-Germany, the Elbe surpassed its flood record set in 1845. Volunteers banded to protect the city's cultural treasures, including moving thousands of works of art from the Zwinger Palace, home to one of Europe's great collections, to higher levels. ■



The swollen Vltava cascades past the Prague castle. Below, the Elbe lays at the Zwinger in Dresden (top). The Danube drains farmland east of Linz, Austria (middle). Sandbags protect a Prague hotel.





Tourists visiting the Parthenon, on the Acropolis (opposite), workers at the Peace and Friendship Stadium, where the basketball competition will be held (right); subway station in Athens

A MAD RUSH FOR THE FINISH LINE

After three years of delay, will Athens be ready to host the 2004 Summer Games?

TWO YEARS FROM NOW, the 13th day of August will fill on a Friday in Athens, that date has already been nicknamed Black Friday—opening day for the 2004 Summer Olympics. Over the next two weeks, the 28 sports featured in the Games will each have a competition going on in one sector or another of this hot, dense, bustling Mediterranean city. No less than 300,000 visitors will join the usual four million or so Athenians trying to achieve a feat of Olympic proportions—circumnavigating between point A and point B in this hopelessly congested city. “Can you imagine that?” asks Ioanna Symeonidou, straining his head in disbelief. “All 28 sports, all over town!” A former Olympic athlete and now an Athens Games official, Symeonidou is guiding a group of foreigners on a tour of

Olympic sites—proposed ones, that is, given construction delays. As if to emphasize his point, our minibus is stuck in heavy traffic. “It certainly hopes someone has tried to imagine that,” my Turkish neighbor mumbles only half-jokingly.

Someone has, of course. Seeing Athens choke up in a two-week-long, wall-to-wall traffic jam is one of the Games organizers’ worst nightmares. Not to mention filling to capacity the deadline for the construction of the Olympic facilities. As a result, officials in this ancient city—over 3,000 years old, and with the archaeological area to show for it—are contending in the future tense, as is in “here we will.” What follows such statements is a seemingly endless list of protests.

There will be special bus lanes, a new

suburban rapid rail line leading to the new airport, a new tramline, further restrictions on private cars in downtown streets, three new subway lines, mass ships ordered in the port of Piraeus to serve as extra hotels. And then there are the plans to renovate existing sports facilities, plant 290,000 new trees and a million shrubs, create fountains, construct 120 km of new urban sidewalks, transform boulevards into highways, create a pedestrian path around the Acropolis, and build an Olympic Village for 16,000 athletes and officials as well as a fully wired international media center, a swimming basin, a jacking center, a baseball stadium. All of it is meant not only to serve the Olympics, but to provide a boost to the city itself. “Athens has a glorious past,

but when you look at the city today, it is not working well,” says organizing committee spokesman Pierre Koenders. “We want to use the momentum of the Olympics to improve the city’s infrastructure, change mentalities, and present Athens with a new legacy.”

Lofty goals, given how far behind things seem to be. The International Olympic Committee announced in 1997 that the 2004 Olympics would take place in Athens. In the spring of 2000, the IOC threatened to take the Games somewhere else if Athens did not get its act together quickly. No official explanation has been given for why the Greeks would three years talking about the Olympics, putting together plans and getting down to digging the tunnels, proving the roads and building the facilities they were talking about. But my Turkish seatmate has an opinion. “In Greece, the government has a finger in every pie—everything is political.” He, a neighbor, a Belgian, adds “Here, everyone wants to be the star, the one who

scores the goal—that is not very good for teamwork.” Koenders, whose job it is to answer such tough questions, told Murdoch: “We have had difficulties at the beginning—there was lack of education, bureaucratic meddling, red tape.” Clearing his throat, he adds, “Maybe the government did not properly assess the enormous size of the task at hand.”

This spring, the IOC and Athens seem to have put itself on schedule. NBC, which will fork out \$1.6 billion for the right to broadcast the Games, and about the same thing. Local spokesmen are optimistic: “We are Mediterranean,” says Olympic official Constantinos Voulgouris, smiling. “Always a bit slow off the mark, but we will get there, you’ll see.” It will be at a price: public investment in city infrastructure that must be ready in time for the Games is now almost \$7 billion, and the cost is rising, pushed by over-the-top costs. Most large downtown hotels are undergoing major renovations. The airport, built by a German consortium, is already functioning—but the highway

leading to it has yet to be completed. Athens is like a man who woke up late and is running to catch the bus. And, in Kostas Makris, a spokesman for the Sunday *Eleftherotipia* (Free Press) weekly newspaper, “Working around the clock has certainly not been part of the Greek tradition.”

The problems of spending a big, old city like Athens for an event of this size are compounded by the relatively small size of Greece, a country of 11 million with a per capita gross domestic product of \$26,600. “The size of the country means that available resources and expertise are limited,” says Dick Pound, the Canadian who was a vice president of the International Olympic Committee and is now head of the World Anti-Doping Agency. “There is a limited number of businesses in a country the size of Greece.” But there is other expertise. “Give it to them, they know how to handle money—13 billion means a year,” Pound points out. “And, of course, they own the copyrights on the Olympics.”

IN ANTIQUITY, the Greeks organized Olympic Games every four years for 12 centuries, without interruption. They even stopped fighting whenever war was at hand for the duration of the competition, ensuring the tradition of the Olympic truce. And when athletes gathered in Athens in 2004, echoes of history, both ancient and more recent, will be everywhere. The marathon will be run along a track very close to the original path followed by the famous messenger who died of exhaustion after running to Athens from Marathon to herald the Greeks’ victory in a brief struggle with the Persians. The race will finish in the ongoing, horseshoe-shaped marble stadium where the first modern city Olympics were staged in 1896, at the foot of the Acropolis, the heart of Athens, where the ruins of the Parthenon, the temple to the goddess Athena, still stand.

For all its pain, though, Athens is very much a modern city. In its 306 BC there were about 300,000 people living here,” explains Ioanna Symeonidou, a tourist guide under contract with the Greek government. “The population remained roughly stable for 25 centuries, until the 1920s. Then, boom!” Thanks to good part to the influx of over a million Greeks from Turkey, the capital red-

steadily grew. Now, Athens has about 4 million people—more than a third of the country's total population—making it probably the newest old city in the world.

Singhena has an apartment in the tourist district of Plaka, at the foot of the Acropolis. The value of her home, she says, has doubled over the past three years. She is now submitting it to a rich Greek-American divorcee from Miami—and moving to Glyfada, a suburb. "It's where the smart money is going," she explains. Glyfada, now better developed, is on the coast, near the site of the old airport about 15 km from the Acropolis. Plans to build an Olympic suburban town had to downtown Athens have sent prices skyrocketing there. "The suburbs are not what they were 15 years ago," Singhena explains. "Today, you find better restaurants, coffee shops, better shops in the but's. Also, it is easier to breathe there."

Breathing in Athens is not a problem these scorching days, especially in summer when the thermometer regularly pops over 40 C. During such heat waves, a climatic emergency can hold the fumes of cars and chimneys captive near the ground, turning the hot air filthy brown and toxic. Conditions usually improve by mid-August, when temperatures cool off somewhat as the easterly wind starts blowing in from the mountains. That explains why the Athens Games will take place late in the summer.

But local journalists are concerned on Olympic politics, not the weather. Kateri Makri says she and others on the Greek beat have dug around for dirt, following hints from opposition politicians about wrongdoing and corruption in the Olympic organization, but no major scandal has surfaced so far. "So we spend a lot of copy covering the shoe companies and the cheap shirt politicians take one another in order to gain a place in the Olympic spotlight," she says. Tires that can be fire-proof, Minister Costas Karamanlis, whose nickname PASOK has given him for most of the past 35 years, is used to have been quoted smiling thus glancing at Athens, obtaining the Games. His priority was to clean up his country's finances in time for the conversion to the new European Union currency, the euro. That involved running government budgets—not spending vast sums of euros on the Olympics. Greece became



The unfinished Olympic Village, which will house thousands of athletes and officials

very busy shortly after the IOC's stern warning, and has been playing catch-up since. Singhena appeared one of his highest profile ministers to run the show: Foreign Affairs Minister George Papandreu and Culture Minister Evangelos Voulas (in Greek, sports is culture), each of them a possible successor to the aging Karamanlis.

Singhena also appointed Gerasimos Angelopoulos-Daskalidis—a wealthy, high-profile lawyer who was instrumental in pushing Athens' candidacy for the Summer Games—to run the Olympic organizing committee. Angelopoulos-Daskalidis is a former parliamentarian for the conservative New Democracy Party, which is currently way ahead of PASOK in the polls. If the Games look to be heading toward a success, pundits say she might be drafted to lead that party against the Singhena government in an election to be held in 2004, shortly before the Games.

So the Olympics may have an impact on Greek politics. And some say the 2004 Games may herald a change in Greek ways. "The Olympic Games never come to a society during boring, depressed periods," journalist Makri says. "They usually happen at the peak of heady changes. Greece is a wonderful country, but we were used to running our business like we played, alone in our corner of the world. We like good living, we are not too keen on hard work, we do everything at the last minute, and take pride in our sophisticated

inefficiency. But, of course, you cannot prepare for the Olympics in that state of mind." Karamanlis of the Olympic organizing committee explains things much the same terms. It was necessary for Greece, he says, "to change our culture, our way of doing things" before getting on the right track with preparation.

Maybe hosting the Olympics symbolizes the new internationalism sweeping Greece. Until recently, the country had to muddle close to speak of it. It was an ethnically homogeneous nation, speaking a language and using an alphabet shared by an elite one on earth, a society of bureaucrats, artists and poets run by a small business class with rich political ties. That is changing. Fast. "Call it globalization," says Elena Hatzidakis-Andriou, a three-time-filming film producer in Athens. "What has changed is the people. The younger generation is more internationally minded, gendered and much more ambitious. We compare ourselves to France or England, not to the past or to the Italians. We all speak English. In the Balkans, they don't."

There, she said, Greece is fast becoming a full-fledged European country. It is no longer the Balkans with a waterflood and the devil may care anarchy immortalized by Anthony Quinn's famous Zorba the Greek. It pays its bills euros and

An almost completed city of five million people awaits an estimated 300,000 visitors

looks laughably at its neighbors—Albania, the former Yugoslavias, Turkey—Bosnia the right side of the fence. Greeks will pull off the Olympics in 2004, because they are not... Greeks say more. This is the message. And the successful Olympics in Athens in 2004 are meant to be the medium of that message.

"For a long time, we have been a closed society, very close to our traditions, but that is over now," notes Michalis Reppeas, 45, a movie director and writer. "Zorba is history. My apartment could as well be in Madrid or Paris." He says this without regret or nostalgia for younger Greeks, globalization-minded and without a modicum of freedom more than Albanians. Elena Hatzidakis-Andriou, who has produced Reppeas's films, says globalization will spell the end of the corrupt regime that is responsible for most problems plaguing Athens today. Greece is too small to support all the creative people here, so it has always been the ones with the best connections, not the most competent, who got the place. "Working with internationalists, staying the Olympics, the idea, 'Honor everybody to adopt more stringent standards of ethics and efficiency'."

So wait: Greece today before it disappears? Sort of. "In 10 years, we will have

become a second-world, multicultural, European country," Makri says. "I don't know if we are ready for that, but it is happening." Immigration in Greece is one of the signs of that—and yes, Greeks are not ready. The country whose main export throughout the last century was emigration—some two million to North America alone—has become an attractive destination for immigrants from Albania, the Balkans and the former Soviet Union. There are about a million of them, their parents more or less in order, most of them living in and around Athens.

The Greeks call them, generally, the Albanians. They don't like them, don't trust them, and blame them for most of their recent problems. Albanians don't speak the language, don't know the codes and the rules, are organized into criminal rings and are always willing to work as the black market for a fraction of the normal wage, Greeks say. Some of the most powerful do not much like the Greeks either, and what they seem to be busy becoming.

"Graft, greed, corruption, extravagance—that is what they're all about," says Ghiorghis, a Romanian waiter in Plaka. "Nobody is happy, everybody is after money, money." He came to Greece after his work permit for Germany and England expired. "To tell the truth, the Greeks make me proud to be Romanian," he concludes with a smile.

But, even as all is changing, you can still

search the surface and see Greece as it once was. Adriano is the name of the longest, busiest street in Plaka. It looks like any other tourist trap the world over, selling food, nostalgia and ambience to here-today, gone-tomorrow visitors. At the end of the street are the ruins of the agora of Roman times, an important public place that was alive 2,000 years ago. Go to the left from there, into a maze of streets and alleys that become narrower and steeper the closer you come to the foot of the walls of the Acropolis. In the end you enter passageways where cars cannot fit, between tiny whitewashed houses reminiscent of villages in the Cyclades or the islands where the people who built them in the 18th or 19th came from.

Now tourists wander up here. I met an old woman, dressed in black, wearing a carpet, bald-headed children playing with cars, and a man—Zorba. I quietly invite him—sitting on a stool with the eastern slope of the Acropolis, smoking a cigarette and contemplating the sunset. The Acropolis was once a city of a philosopher, that gave us democracy, philosophy and almost 2,500 years ago. But the Acropolis has also witnessed disaster. Greece felled and the Roman Empire rose, with new temples built beside the Parthenon. With the conversion of the Roman Empire to Christianity, the Parthenon became a church. The Turks, who had left Greece from 1454 until 1833, took a harem on the Acropolis, and converted the Parthenon into a mosque and built a powder depot that was once hit by Venetian cannon fire, blowing the whole place to bits. In the 19th century, Lord Elgin ferried many of the Acropolis's classical ruins to Britain.

Then and there, it becomes apparent why the Greeks may seem so unimpressed about the prospect of hosting one of their culture and identity to Europe and the global village. Classical Greece peaked 25 centuries ago, for the Greeks, living a bit of their culture is a constant and no one degrades what has been happening to them over time. But things are never totally dead. Smoking with Zorba, as the city around us rises toward its Olympic destiny, it is clear that whatever happens to Greek culture, remnants of what were before can always be found, just under the veneer of today.

A SCARY SUMMER

Everywhere you look, there's another tale of disaster. What are we doing to our planet?

HAVING A NICE SUMMER? It's hard to imagine how mad a newspaper, watch TV, surf the Web, and you soon get the impression that the world is coming to an end. It's enough to make a person want to wrap and hide. But where? Curl up at home and crank the air conditioner? Forget that—with hot weather straining our power grids, we're being asked in many parts to set the dial at 26 C or high, so. So fine, let's make the best of it and enjoy the outdoors. Okay, out of luck there, too, with all that eye-burning, throat-searing smog. Fine the city for seasonal tranquility? Maybe not around Georgian Bay, a popular Ontario vacation spot: the local message rattleers are being sent into exile, perhaps because of the heat. And with water levels down in many places, the cottage dock looks like a diving platform for a mad bath. Everywhere you turn this summer, there's another scary story.

Summer marks the traditional fly season in the news business, and this year, it seems harder than ever to sort out the hype from the truly horrible. When the usual news sources dry up for the summer, we reporters wage the sweet from our furred knives and go looking. What we invariably find is nasty stuff, like the mosquito-borne West Nile virus. More ink than blood has been spilled over this more often-than-not benign infection agent. For all the fuss, it's all extremely rare, tends to produce fiery rashes, the like symptoms, and—although potentially fatal on the elderly and frail—has yet to kill anyone in Canada. Still, this mosquito-ridden virus out of Africa seems to make the news every other day. Maybe it's the African connection, but we're not talking Ebola here.

On the other hand, people should be more worried about what they're spraying in Winnipeg to kill the algonquin. They call it fogging; trucks roll into neighbourhoods and lay down a cloud of the pest-

icide malathion. It takes out mosquitoes, all right, but what else does it do by way of long-term side effects? No one knows for sure.

Maybe a couple of fish stories will take our minds off the gloom. Head the one about the giant Asian carp? Fish suckers' blog reports begins with a menacing description: Asian carp can weigh over 45 kg (bigger than a small child), reach more than a metre in length, jump three metres in the air if startled, and eat up to 40 per cent of their own body weight in plankton and vegetation a day. They lay eggs in the hundreds of thousands. And they could be coming to a lake near you.

Asian carp now swirls around in the Mississippi River system after escaping from Arkansas catfish farms in the early 1990s. Now there's a possibility they'll enter the Great Lakes through a canal connecting the Mississippi and the lakes at Romeville, Ill. The environmental havoc they could wreak rivals that of a so-called alien invasion. With their huge appetites, they could wipe out species by depriving them of their food. Frightening, but a fish of his, given the human tendency to move plants and animals around the planet.

There's something inherently menacing about dark, impenetrable water and what lurks beneath. Besides Asian carp, a cold-blooded voracity with razor-sharp teeth is making the news. Some soil apparently dangled beneath snailhead, a delicacy in China, into an old Maryland quarry filled with water two years ago. There we find that the voracious, voraci-

ous creature, which looks a bit like a mottled eel, might get into nearby Little Patuxent River, and from there, into Chesapeake Bay, where a lot of fishermen count on making a living. The concern seems well-based. The freak of nature can use its powerful fins to yank—walk on land. Thanks to rudimentary air-breathing lungs, it can even survive for several days out of water. Biologists have trapped snail head, suggesting the northern snailhead may now be breeding—and that's a really bad sign.

How about that weather? It used to be a safe enough topic of cheerful conversation, but no more. David Phillips, a senior climatologist at Environment Canada, is a favourite among journalists. He knows his stuff and can be counted on for a good quote. "It's almost like there's a Phillips Index, somebody was using the other day," he says. "When they were doing so many interviews, we must be having weird, wild and wacky weather."

Sadly, we say. Parts of the Prairies are into their second or third devastating year of drought. All across Canada, health officials have issued a steady stream of warnings about UV, air quality, humidity and heat. We collectively shrug and climb into our SUVs to drive to work alone. If it isn't clear yet, it should be global warming caused by burning fossil fuels causes severe weather conditions. That means lots of rain and flooding or heat that bakes farmland hard and dry.

We have no one to blame but ourselves. North Americans represent just five per cent of the planet's population, but gobble up 25 per cent of world energy reserves, say a warning. United Nations report released last week. In 1998, we spent one quarter of the world's carbon dioxide into the air, and average weather in the north. Remember that smoggy smog in parts of Alberta at the end of July? Know as July, for heaven's sake? Just south of Grande Prairie, they



were visited with 20 cm of it. A few days later, Regina and Saskatoon were drenched by their second heaviest rain in a century after sweating through scorching temperatures. And don't forget hurricane season, which peaks in late August and early September. "We haven't heard a lot from the East Coast this summer," says Phillips. "Their time in the sun has yet to come,

and it may very well be within a month."

Climate change—that's the truly scary one. Another ominous story came from Natural Resources Canada last week, called "Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation: A Canadian Perspective." Expect our fresh water to continue disappearing if we allow surface-air temperatures to climb, as expected, by as much as

5.8 degrees over the next 100 years, says the report. Recreational fisheries don't just affect fishing. As water levels drop, pollutants become more concentrated. Hydroelectric dams are left high and dry. It makes you wonder how a future generation is going to grow its food, find drinking water and power its air conditioning.

Perhaps you're thinking, then, that you need a vacation from reality, some place like... Europe. Forget it: hotels in Prague are underwater. Canada is scrambling to save historical treasures, and zoo staff are choosing extended missions. Parts of Russia, Germany and Austria are also out of the question, flooded by rivers bloated by torrential rains.

And it's not the rain and flooding in central Europe. It's a mammoth, weather-changing, toxic cloud over southern Asia. The United Nations estimates that the so-called Asian Brown Cloud is 26 million sq km from Afghanistan and India through much of China. It is fed by vehicle exhaust, factory emissions, coal-burning power stations, forest fires and wood-burning stoves. The cloud blocks the sun, reduces sea-water evaporation and consequently rainfall. Scientists say similar pollution exacerbated previous droughts in Africa that killed more than a million people. The UN thinks the Asian smog could lead to the premature deaths of tens of thousands of people from respiratory illnesses. And the cloud can move halfway around the planet in a week.

Similar clouds have over South America and the Mediterranean. Southern Ontario has its own, which it was sharing with Quebec last week as the Keweenaw began drifting into the Maritimes. It isn't difficult to imagine a day when these airborne messes join together in one massive veil of death. With another Earth Summit on sustainable development set to begin in Johannesburg next week, Canadians might wonder why our government hasn't acted on the Kyoto strategy for battling global warming, developed at a similar conference in 1997.

For now, though, maybe we should all just go home, crank open a cold one, and think about what we're doing to ourselves. And with luck, when the smog goes on the barbecue, as one will mention and cure disease.

West Nile virus. Voracious alien fish. Aggressive rattlers. Drought. Floods. Toxic smog clouds. Snow in July. It's a frightening world out there.

TO SAVE SPECIES, YOU HAVE TO SAVE FORESTS. EVEN THE ONES UNDERWATER.

go to www.wwf.ca/marine

Gwaii Haanas. These are the mystical waters of Haida Gwaii/Queen Charlotte Islands, home to giant kelp forests—ecosystems more diverse than rainforests. More than 100,000 creatures can be found in just one square metre of kelp forest. Rich in nutrients, Gwaii Haanas provides crucial feeding grounds for humpback whales, orcas, dolphins and sea lions. For eight years, World Wildlife Fund and the Haida Nation have been working to get Canada to zone these waters

As a Marine Protected Area, WWF has funded research. WWF has created a conservation plan. WWF has convinced the oil & gas industry to give up its drilling rights. Yet still, nothing has been done. When will Canada protect Gwaii Haanas? When will Canada start protecting other crucial areas on our coasts? With your help, we'll get the government to act now. Join our team. Call WWF at 1-800-635-8844 or visit www.wwf.ca/marine. Let's leave our children a livable planet.





CANADA'S CRITICAL CHOICE

Either we fund defence properly or let the U.S. do the job for us

WHEN JOHN MCCALLUM officially welcomed the Afghanistan expeditionary force of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry back to their home base in 34 months earlier this month, it was anything but a routine occasion. One of the largest military homecomings since the Second World War, it was at one level an emotional outpouring of thanksgiving that all but four of the soldiers had returned. Our last raw master of national defence made the most of the occasion with his uncharacteristic (or sensitive) expressions of gratitude and blessing.

At another level, the event signalled an important watershed in Canadian history: extension of the pretence that Canada's current state of military preparedness counts for anything in the post-9/11 world.

The facts are easy to come by: We couldn't sustain this very contingent of 800 troops in the field for more than six months, nor did we have more bodies to replace them. We had to rent U.S. spare parts, plan to get them there and once they arrived, could not buy them proper camouflage equipment and could not provide artillery support or helicopter gunships.

The Afghan expedition performed with fortitude beyond the call of duty. But it also proved that the Chretien government's neglect of defence issues has amounted to a perhaps unintended policy of unilateral disarmament. Over the past decade, our military contribution to the defence of freedom abroad and security at home has become marginal at best, useless at worst.

Militarily, Canada is at a crossroads. International recognition requires no exceptions or boundaries. We're on the line. We have only two choices—and very little time to decide which option to follow.

The path of least resistance would be to formally turn over the defence of Canada to the United States. In other words,

admit that in the currently fluid and belaboured climate we can not procure any meaningful military autonomy and that we simply become an American dependency. A Hawaii with police bears.

Jack Granatstein, a military historian and co-chairman of the Council for Canadian Security in the 21st Century, points out in a recent C.D. Howe Institute study that "although terrorism poses a real threat, it is not the most serious risk. The danger lies in warring binlens about the United States at a time it is in a wretched, anxious mood." Granatstein also predicts that "if Canada does not fully comply with U.S. continental security plans, the Americans could seal our border and deploy their armed forces in our territory."

In his first interview as defence minister, McCallum makes crystal clear that he has no intention of joining the "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em" club. The new minister intends to fulfill his mandate. He believes that co-operation with the Americans is essential; co-optation would be suicidal. For his part, Chief of the Defence Staff Raymond Henault in his annual report says that while "this status quo is not sustainable," with the proper budget and leadership Canada can contribute meaningfully to its own defence.

The challenges are daunting. Our submarines lack. Our fighters are ready for use, but our navy is right now a Sea King helicopter 17 days to fly from Vancouver

to Halifax (because of three emergency night landings), longer than three Soviet spent planes. Its last air balloon around the world. Let's face it, not valuing our institutions enough to be willing to defend them and only spending real money on defence will allow us to preserve the country that, despite our many problems, most outsiders believe is blessed with the assistance of heaven.

It comes down to a simple periodic appeal: protecting Canada, damn it! And if they even work. Even the Liberals' own pollster, Michael Monro, in May reported that 48 per cent of Canadians (compared to only 24 per cent a year ago) are actually behind increased defence spending. (Granatstein argues that what's needed is a minimum increase of 20,000 permanent force personnel from 66,000, plus a doubling of reserves to 50,000 and providing them with all the modern equipment they'll need.)

Much will turn on the McCallum factor. The modest NDP from just outside Toronto who only 21 months ago was the Royal Bank's chief economist is now just another pretty face. (We've had 15 defence ministers over the past 25 years, and except for Barney Tripp, none of them made much difference.)

McCallum knows little about the military, but more a great deal about his country and can lend a new role quicker than Tim Hunkle. He is nurtured in the rigid discipline of two private schools (Jesuits House School in Montreal) and Trinity College in Port Hope, Ont.) and earned dual scholarships at Harvard and Yale to study economics at Cambridge and the University of Paris and, later, McGill. He is so comfortable in French that he taught for five years at the Université du Québec in Montreal. Politically, as a young man, he was an adviser to Manicoba NDP premier Ed Schreyer and helped in several NDP campaigns.

"We really have to trust our troops more deeply, either we have to give them more resources or require them to do this."

By age 42 he was dean of arts at McGill University, with 200 professors reporting to him, each of them burdened with a far more complex task than any general or admiral.

McCallum, now 52, an even burst of deep roots within the Liberal Party. Jean Patenaude, his great-grandfather, occupied a summer cottage beside Michener King in the Gifford Hills outside Ottawa. The two were removed to be in line (if not level), and King historian C.P. Stacy speculates that the war was so important to the veteran game master and the Liberal Party that Stacy refers to her as "one of the founders of his fortress."

John McCallum's credentials are impeccable, and he leaves the future of this country in a state of some chance.

READY FOR THE CHALLENGE

What's your top priority?

If there's one thing I have decided, it's that we really have to trust our troops more deeply, because they've too often been stretched beyond the breaking point. Either we have to give them more resources or require them to do less.

That will mean spending considerably more money.

I never publicly named a dollar amount, but the military is talking about something like an extra billion dollars a year to \$13 billion. That's money I do wish we currently do not on a sustainable, human basis. Some part of the additional resources should be internally generated. So I'm asking the question, what are we doing now that is low priority or that we don't really need to do?

Let's talk about that terrible word, interoperability. Does it mean an joint command for Canadians and American forces? Or does it mean more than that?

The central question for Canada is our place in North America. While I'm a proud Canadian and don't bow down to Americans, I'm a realist, and what we're doing now is negotiating with the Americans to have more joint planning for the military defence of the continent.



There's nothing more important for a government than to protect the lives of its citizens. So we have to enter into this kind of contingency planning. Also, can you imagine how the Americans would react if we said no to their offer to plan together, and then there was a major terrorist attack on the U.S. emanating from Canada?

They'd go ballistic.

They wouldn't care—they'd just march in. So what I'm saying is, to save Canadian lives, to save American lives, and to provide us cover, if you like, were there to be a terrorist attack on the U.S. through Canada, forward planning is a good thing to do. But it doesn't mean any loss of sovereignty because it does not give command of any of our military to the United States. What it does do, is set up conditions and protocols under which in the event of a disaster we could invite them to help us, it does not yield any sovereignty. It's a common sense thing to plan in the post-9/11 world.

The next event in world history, according to the Bush administration, will be the invasion of Iraq. Where would Canada stand?

From what we know today, I would be very skeptical about us having any participation. Even within the U.S. government there isn't really a consensus. At the same time, we can't

be entirely saying no right now because it depends on incontrovertible evidence the Americans provide that Saddam Hussein is poised to attack the Western world with missiles or some terrible weapon it's not economical that under those circumstances, the whole thing could happen under UN auspices.

What about the anti-ballistic missile defence network that George Bush has been pushing against the "axis of evil"?

They haven't asked us yet, but from what I know the Americans are going to build it anyway. Canada would to some extent be protected as well, just because of our geography. So the advantage of us participating is that we might have some say in how this might happen.

As an economist, surely your most cost-effective gesture would be to make greater use of reserves, who are on call in emergencies but don't eat up permanent budgets. There's a long history of inactivity between the regulars and the idea on the reserve side that they just get the drops, the leftovers from the budget. We have a plan to address that issue, but it's not yet funded. Certainly from a cost-effectiveness point of view, the fact that you only pay people when they're on duty represents a huge saving.



GOLD DIGGERS OF 2002

Today's prospectors still live in hope of the big one

IT'S TAKEN half an hour by hour and a 45-minute vertical scramble through silt, boulders and talus to get here—nearly 300 metres up a mountain near Tofino, B.C., on the west coast of Vancouver Island. After a week of rain, the sun is beating through clear-washed air as what we have come to see. It doesn't look like much. Just a ruffled layer of rusty brown and dark gray rock, scuffed clear of dirt to expose an outcrop maybe 10 metres by 30 metres. Then Anne Rethland picks up a bank of sandstone-patched stone the size of a grapefruit and whacks it with a hammer. The blow exposes a fresh surface as white as a man's skin. It's rough here, yet it gleams in the sun the colour of freshly polished brass.

Rethland, 55, is an undermailed sort of guy, but now he actually grins. "This is great," he says. "This is massive. And as you go down on this thing, it's going to get richer and better." By "thing" he means the patch of metamorphism in this particular location. Anytime it has found copper, cobalt and nickel in these rocks, as well as silver, gold, palladium and platinum—the last one of the most valuable minerals on the planet, used in catalytic converters for auto exhausts and the highest of high-end jewellery. It's the kind of rock Rethland and those like him spend a lifetime looking for.

To many urbanites, the word "prospector" evokes the scummy image of Humphrey Bogart in the classic 1946 movie, *The*

Rethland starts the hunt for mineral clues before going out "to get a little dirt."

Treasure of the Sierra Madre, all the tools often trade weighing down the burro he's dragging into the mountains. But the professional lives on. Each summer across Canada, hundreds of modern-day Bogarts pack their tools into four-by-fours and work their way to some lead. Some are trained geologists, others pan-mongers with a pickup knowledge of minerals. What unites them is a belief—some might call it obsession—that the mother-lode boulders just over the next hill. When Lorne Warren was 7, he emptied his clothes drawers to draw rock samples out of sight of his mother. Now 56 and named Prospector of the Year by the B.C. & Yukon Chamber of Mines in January, he scans the valleys north and east of his home in Seabrook, in the B.C. Interior. "He's like looking for buried treasure," he says. "I keep thinking I have a couple of big ones I just have to

get people to recognize."

The prospector with the most active prospects are the biggest and richest once Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia. But only in B.C. does the pursuit of profit represent a vein of passion and endeavour running deep into the bedrock of settled history. For, then famished, drew prospectors to those eastern places. In the West, it was gold, then more gold. Just as the great California gold rush of 1849 preceded, well ahead of strikes further north. American, then European and Chinese gold seekers flooded up the Fraser River and Interior valleys. Rubies pulled through the passes to carry equipment to the workings. British Columbia was born, almost literally, with a golden spoon into trouble.

Today's treasure seekers start by mining the records of those who preceded them. Ralph Keefe's grandfather came to François Lake in central British Columbia in 1905 by way of the Klondike. A retired provincial forestry employee, Keefe and his wife winter in Victoria, staying with family while Ralph digs through a public archive that includes the assay results of every claim staked in the province since his grandfather's day. The record is augmented by detailed maps of provincial geology. "I go through all the assessment reports," he says, "all the regional geochemical surveys and I pick out my projects for the following year."

Rethland starts an Internet version of those and other archives—posted to the Web by another group of B.C. history. These early prospectors were in such a rush to reach the gold that scribbles never did get around to signing treaties with the resident natives. Efforts in the last decade to remedy the oversight have made B.C. one of the most-scraped places in Canada, as Aboriginals and governments seek to agree at least on the assessment being contested. The collective record exists as a multi-layered virtual map on a computer database the province maintains. One layer shows every logging road in B.C. Another, surface geology. Yet another marks every mineral discovery in the province with a new gear of geobugs. Click on them to find out what was found, when and by whom.

It's an unmarked set of clues to the invisible tendons and flanks of the earth's

The hunt for buried treasure demands a taste for risk: 'The odds of a prospect becoming a mine are one in a thousand.'



core—and the whole thing is available online to the public. Before his visit to Tofino, Rethland sat in his home office in North Vancouver and typed "gold" into his computer. Seconds later, the database spit out a list of every strike on record in the province. "The modern prospector still has to go out in the field and get a little dirt," he said. "But you have the best chance if you use the technology to zero in on your target without having to spend years on the ground."

Thomas burned in front of Bickering Web pages and over many files are tested in summer, when prospectors head for the bush. There, the strategy is pretty much what it was for Keefe's granddaddy. Essentially, it's the theory that everything comes out in the wash. Sooner or later, any mineral near the surface will get washed into a creek somewhere nearby. Find the creek, follow it uphill, and you find the treasure.

Rethland returns to sea level from his mountainside claim staggering under a pack full of rock samples. Before pointing his aluminum boat down Tofino Inlet toward the campground where he's staying with his wife and daughter, he sits along the shore a bit. Where a trickle reveals water running into the sea, he notices it. Getting to the creek on foot is an all-fores struggle through thickets of mud and jamper. Finally reaching it, he pulls a handful of moss from a rock in midstream and puts it in a plastic bag. Early prospe-

ctors panned stream gravel for grains of gold as silver. Rethland lets nature do the job. Moss acts as a strainer, collecting debris in its roots. He will analyze it later for evidence of upstream ore.

The hunt for buried treasure demands a taste for risk. After all the research, lifting and sampling, the trail soldiers ends at a mine gaze. "The odds of a prospect becoming a mine are one in a thousand," says Ross Beatty, a former exploration geologist who is now the chairman and CEO of Pan American Silver Corp., a Vancouver-based public company that dug \$57 million worth of silver out of Mexico and Peru last year. And the odds against success are getting steeper. "Over the last 50 years, the discovery rate is going down globally," Beatty says. "Mineral deposits are getting scarcer and the cost of exploration is going up."

Prospectors in British Columbia have had additional complaints. The once-robust dot-com rush siphoned off many of the high-stakes players who used to get their charge of adrenaline grubbing thousands on junior mining companies on the Vancouver Stock Exchange. By 1999, the VSE closed its doors. The amount spent on mineral exploration in the province melted away to \$25 million from \$250 million at the outset of the 1990s. Equally problematic for prospectors was the environmental opposition to mining that dented the drilling of the New Democrats who ruled the province for most of the last decade. But since the Liberals swept into Victoria last year, there has been a dramatic shift in government friendliness toward exploration, with hefty new tax credits for investors and reduced red tape to speed processing of exploration permits. In the meantime, gold prices have been on the move, and there is optimism the bear market in commodities may be turning around.

In a dozen years prospecting for buried treasure, Ralph Keefe has opposed 14 individual discoveries—and not seen one develop into a mine. But there are several new showings of volcanic massive sulphides, the kind that give up copper, zinc, lead, silver and gold, just offshore from Seabrook. "We'll be hearing more of these," he means. Few prospectors and up rich—and few ever give up hope. ☐



THE COST OF COLLEGE

As tuition fees skyrocket, Ottawa needs to sweeten its tax-free savings program

BEFORE HE BECAME Jean Chrétien's minister of so many things, John Manley was Canada's achingly earnest preacher for productivity growth. Today, the finance minister is struggling to defend that mission against a Prime Minister who is soliciting glamorous spending, with lists from his Liberal MPs. These are anxious times. Somewhere Manley must defend his priorities—and keep post-secondary education, a crucial engine of productivity, near the top of his budget agenda. The sad fact is that most Canadian families can't afford to save for their children's education. Tuition fees have skyrocketed, rising far more rapidly than inflation or family income. When tuition income rose modestly, average Ontario university tuition will be \$4,795, in Nova Scotia, Canada's highest, it will be \$5,676.

Worse, the non-profit USC Education Savings Plan, which runs savings plans for moderate-income families, estimates that, in 18 years, a four-year university program could cost \$61,378. That includes books and incidental expenses. With residence, the cost could be \$122,644. The prospect is daunting. "That is why we are trying to encourage people to start early," says USC president Brian Marshall. "Then they don't have to save nearly as much—because of the compounding interest."

Ottawa does have a useful remedy—which it should sweeten: Registered Education Savings Plans (RESPs) have existed since 1972: anyone can put aside after-tax money in a designated account, and the gains will be tax-free until the student needs it. (Even then, little or no tax is generally paid, because student incomes are usually low.) The popularity of RESPs has been steadily expanding since 1985, when Ottawa started to match 20 per cent of any annual contribution up to \$2,000. That works out to \$400 a year—or a maximum lifetime Canada Education Savings Grant of \$7,200 per child.

These are other good features. Contributions can donate a maximum of \$4,000 per year—with a lifetime limit of \$42,000. Although the plans were once restricted to universities and colleges, students can now tag them for technical schools. And if a beneficiary decides not to continue past high school, donors don't lose their money. They can use the funds, minus the federal grant, to fill unused rooms in their Registered Retirement Savings Plans (RRSPs). If they opt for cash, they keep the principal and the earnings—although these are taxed.

It's a smart investment. And Canada has gradually enriched on. Since 1986, the number of beneficiaries has more than doubled, almost certainly because of the grant. By March 31, Ottawa had handed out almost \$2.2 billion in grants to about 1.6 million children. By 2000, the most recent year for which figures are available, Canadians had tucked \$72 billion into RESPs. Better yet, Ottawa calculates that it will forego \$164 million in tax revenue on the income in RESP accounts next year—up from \$130 million this year. So their popularity is growing.

But not nearly enough. Only one in five children now has an RESP. And that is Manley's problem. The situation is especially worrisome among lower-income Canadians. In a study released last year, Statistics Canada reported that the parents of 80 per cent of the 1.5 million children in low-income households hoped their kids would get some post-secondary education. But, despite their dreams, low-

income parents had scumbled together funds for less than 300,000 of those kids. In contrast, in households which earned \$80,000 or more, parents had stashed away savings for 63 per cent of the children. "Most of the people receiving the federal grant are not the poor and marginal people who are going to have to borrow to go to school," says University of British Columbia economist Kevin Milligan.

It's not that most Canadians do not want to save: they just don't have the money. Between 1991 and 2000, they left more than \$245 billion in unused room in their RRSP accounts. And these savings are vital for a comfortable old age. The federal government has staidly acknowledged this predicament: last February, it quietly cancelled its proposed Registered Individual Learning Accounts. Investors say Ottawa realized that only wealthier Canadians would be able to use the chance to save for lifetime learning.

So what should we do? We all know the reality: university graduates generally earn more, and their chances of losing their jobs are lower. But only about one-fifth of Canadians aged 18 to 24 actually attend university full time. It has to be easier for parents to save. Which brings us to the next federal budget. The Canadian Association of Non-Profit RESP Dealers has suggested that Ottawa focus its funds on low- and moderate-income families that is, the grant could increase to 24 per cent on the first \$1,000 contribution. (Provincial governments could consider matching grants.)

But that does not mean we should pare back the 20 per cent federal grant on that second \$1,000 annual contribution—unless Ottawa simply cannot afford it. Malcolm Hamilton, an actuary at Mercer Human Resource Consulting Ltd., points out that even wealthy families with mortgage and other children have trouble finding cash for their RESPs. And it seems far from clear that even maximum RESP donations will offset future college costs. "Ottawa has created vehicles so that those who have money don't save," Hamilton says sourly, "but it did not create a population that has any money to save." It is up to Manley to assert priorities for tomorrow's workforce in a season of tight lips. **E**

Mary Jenigan's column appears every other issue. mj@canwest.com

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'THERE IS NO PROOF'

Why Saudi Arabia opposes a U.S. attack on Iraq

TENSIONS ROSE between the United States and Saudi Arabia after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, when it was revealed that 15 of the 19 hijackers were Saudi. Osama bin Laden himself comes from a wealthy Saudi family, and many in the American security establishment now question the kingdom's commitment to fighting terrorism. In a secret July briefing for top Pentagon officials—now widely publicized—experts argued that if Saudi rulers refused to clamp down on homegrown terror, the nation's oil fields should be seized. Meanwhile, the Riyadh government has repeatedly said it will not allow

the U.S. to attack Iraq from bases in Saudi Arabia. Last week, Saudi Arabia's ambassador to Canada, Mohammed Al-Hussaini, talked with *World Editor* Tom Penzell about the American push to topple Iraq's Saddam Hussein.

What explains the growing tensions between Saudi Arabia and the U.S.?

There are certain people in the U.S. and administration who would really love to cast some doubt on the relationship between America and Saudi Arabia. Reports about the briefing were leaked deliberately at a time when Saudi Arabia announced that

"We don't lack democracy," says the ambassador. "Our people are free to leave."

the U.S. military will not be allowed to use the kingdom's soil for an attack on Iraq. There are some hawkish elements within the American administration who are trying to undermine our solid and historic ties. They don't care about democracy or whether Saudi Arabia is Muslim or Christian. They care only about U.S. national interests, which include oil and other strategic issues.

You're saying the war on terrorism isn't at the heart of U.S. concerns?

America cannot be the one single nation that defines terrorism and then goes ahead with an attack on Iraq. Only through a UN resolution on terrorism will Saudi Arabia co-operate.

The U.S. is virtually without support in the Middle East on Iraq. Why?

Instead of criticizing Saudi Arabia, the big question that Americans should want answered is, why is the United States so hated in the Arab and Muslim world? For the Arab world, our main problem is U.S. favoritism toward Israel. We would like an even-handed policy not controlled by hawkish elements in the administration.

We know Saddam has biological weapons and missiles capable of reaching Saudi Arabia during the Gulf War. Why not invade to ensure he no longer possesses weapons of mass destruction?

There is no proof whatsoever at the moment that Saddam has such weapons. Canada has distanced itself from an attack on Iraq. The Europeans are also against it and even the U.S. administration is divided. And since Saddam has invited the UN's chief weapons inspector to check for himself, it would be very dangerous to attack. So Saudi Arabia is in a very good company in not wanting to invade.

What impact would an invasion of Iraq have on wider relations between the Middle East and the West?

Arab countries are also Muslims' concerns, and we are against any attack from Saudi Arabia on any Arab or Muslim community. Who knows what will happen if there is an attack, but an invasion could cause a rift

between the Arab world and the West. Because for us the problem is not Saddam. It is the people of Iraq who are going to suffer. And this is really one of the things that bothers Canada and many European countries as well.

What do the people on the streets of Riyadh say about Saddam?

We could care less about Saddam. People know he is the one who caused the suffering of the Iraqi people. No one else. It was his crime behaviour.

Saudi Arabia has been accused of hiding terrorists.

Remember, Saudi Arabia has been the victim of terrorism. So how would we be the cause or haven of terrorism? We have detained several people suspected of having links with al Qaeda, and we have been co-operating with the United States in the area of intelligence and security.

Still, a lot of Saudi money finds its way abroad.

We have been helping many Muslim countries because the majority of the world's poorest countries are Muslim. We build mosques and schools but those projects are supervised. But if we build a little mosque here and there, that does not mean it is a cell of terrorism.

What about wealthy individuals? They have almost \$700 billion parked in bank accounts in the United States.

They also must give money to the right place. It is regulated. But if someone you cannot trap everyone. How can you? Remember, the involvement of a few Saudi citizens in Sept. 11 does not make them representatives of Saudi Arabia or Islam any more than Timothy McVeigh or the Branch Davidians represent America or Christianity.

If Washington were to somehow install a democratic regime in Baghdad, there have been suggestions the idea might spread and lead to the fall of the House of Saud. Nobody will buy this argument. We don't lack democracy. Our people are free to leave. The people are behind their leaders. Besides, the U.S. wants Saudi Arabia to help stabilizing the region and supply America with oil at reasonable prices. □

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YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS?

Yes, people are being arrested and charged with intent to throw a pile

FOR ME, NOTHING is as pleasing as the soothing sound of a Canadian radio broadcaster. But even the late, great Peter Gzowski couldn't interest many of the stories others are reporting with irony. And so summer temperatures soar, Jersey goes into overdrive.

"A man was arrested in Vancouver and charged with intent to throw a pie," said a straightforward CBC news reader on Aug. 3. I'm away from Canada a lot so I have missed the development of the great Canadian pie story. But this one is a hulu. How do I explain to British readers that Canadian police arrested a man wearing jeans and a T-shirt on suspicion of harassing (somewhere) a pie to throw at Jean Chrétien? His car was impounded with the wilful charge "pie in trunk." Neither the car nor the man had a pie, and the police released him, but only after five hours in a cell and first asking him to take off all his clothes.

Actually, the police arrested two men that day in Vancouver (both subsequently released) within minutes of each other. The other man had a \$1,800 slice of pie (unbaked and unseasoned). The first man was arrested on suspicion of being the second. The first man is a lawyer who has been acting on behalf of all those protesters who see Mr. Chrétien as heading a government that is anti-environment, pro-capitalism, pro-American, anti Third World and so on. I only wish it were, but that's another story. The lawyer says he suspects the police arrested him because he was conspicuously moving at a "trot" in the area where Mr. Chrétien was "up."

This story tells us two things. A strip search in these circumstances is a flouting of the police. It is very unlikely that a person will put a pie up his rectum. But none of the police, for those innocent readers who were not previously aware of it, are arrogant. The less reason they have to arrest someone, the more they hope that they can rectify their initial misdeed

by looking into something often. Meanwhile, the lefty lawyer whose department seemed designed to get himself arrested by the police is waiting for an apology but won't see—which is the only way he'll get it. The chap with the piece of pie says he merely wanted to question Chrétien about Canada's native people who are treated like "political prisoners" on reserves.

Our pepper spray police and morose left-wing demonstrators truly deserve one another. They are a match made in heaven. One only wishes they could be shackled together on some ice floe so they could harass each other for eternity—or until the ice melts.

In temperatures hit 34 C on Aug. 12 in Ottawa, NDP leader Alexa McDonough came out of the sun to announce her willingness to say yes to an Iraq invasion to go there and help solve the crisis with Saddam Hussein. Ms. McDonough says she will go if PM Chrétien organizes an all-party committee. "There is an opening," she said. "The world wants Canada to step into this tiny opening." Oh, really?

Innocence and naivete can't begin to explain how a woman who barely managed to retain official party status for the NDP—and has now given up trying—thinks that she has anything to contribute to this grave geopolitical question. To believe herself able to do anything in this area indicates so great an inability to assess her own political status that it would deserve quoting as an example of delusion in a psychiatric publication.

Our pepper spray police and morose left-wing demonstrators deserve one another. I wish they could be locked up together on some ice floe.

I suppose such a manifestation could be excused if you believed yourself to be Mother Teresa or Joan of Arc and on a mission from God. But short of Ms. McDonough saying that an angel had appeared to her and said that even though you could not get to first base with the NDP in Canada, I say unto you that you can overt the next Middle East war by chatting with Saddam Hussein, we can only look at her pronouncement as an attempt for *Spidey's Return II or Not*.

And finally, Ottawa announced a solution to the eternal battle between males and females. In a speech to the Canadian Bar Association last week, Justice Minister Martin Cauchon said the terms "custody" and "access" will be removed from Canada's divorce laws in legislation that will eliminate much of the "adversarial" elements in divorce. This was greeted with cautious pleasure by Elaine Collins, president of Saskatchewan Shared Parenting Association whose group lobbies for the non-contested parent—usually the father.

Does anyone really believe that people assume adversarial positions in divorce not because they feel divided, betrayed, heartbroken and their lives ruined, but because the words "custody" and "access" fill them with venom? This is the same sort of marital behind-the-scenes to cover up other misadventures with euphemisms: the belief, for example, that by renaming the crippled "handicapped" and the handicapped "challenged" and the challenged "speci-ally-abled," you will take the sting out of paralysis.

If he actually wanted to do something about custody problems, Justice Minister Cauchon has a simple remedy when access is denied, let the non-contested parent withhold payments. But Canada has become a marriage whose warring male elites are in love with the high heel on their thron. None of them actually want more than a few cosmetic changes. Cynical supporters of Cauchon's changes hope they will take the wind out of the sails of protesting fathers and the naive actually think the changes will help. And if you believe that, listen, I've got a story about the tooth fairy that is going to solve Canada's health care problems by making us not want simple syrup. Just tune in. **E**

Barbara Amiel's column appears biweekly. barbar@shaw.ca

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STANDING IN FOR A MAN

The Wrens freed navy men for active duty

WHEN FRIEDA BINDMAN joined the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service (Wrens) in early 1943, she assumed the navy would make use of her university studies in French and German in an interpreter. But after training as a wireless telegraphist, Bindman found herself assigned to the signals branch of naval headquarters in Ottawa. On her first night as duty officer, she received an assignment that would have made the oldest sea sub ject: "Last that night," recalls Bindman, now 85 and living in Ottawa, "a red-tagged [unsubstantiated] message was lowered through the hole in the ceiling that connected us to the operational intelligence room. Stamped MOST SECRET, this diversion signal ordered us to warn our ships that a U boat was in a certain quadrant. I had to choose the code that would be understood by both Allied naval ships and one very special merchant ship: the Queen Mary, crossing the Atlantic with 15,000 Allied soldiers aboard."

Bindman and almost 7,000 other 15- to 45-year-old Canadian women served in the Wrens, an almost forgotten service celebrating its 60th anniversary with a luncheon on the Labour Day weekend in Edmonton. Now in their 70s, 80s and even 90s, these women who answered their nation's call to "Release a Man for Sea Duty" are literally proud of their role in helping to defeat Hitler's war machine. While they mostly worked away from the battle lines, many faced enemy action or threats of enemy attack.

In September, 1940, a year after the outbreak of the Second World War, 28-year-old Irene Carter went to Ottawa on a mission to get Canada to follow the British Royal Navy's lead and establish a women's service that would free men, especially those engaged in electronic intelligence, for action at sea. "In 1940, the navy wasn't



Pike still feels the pride of helping send historic D-Day photos home to Canada.

interested," recalls Carter who worked as a Morse telegraph operator for CN Telegraphs in Winnipeg. "But when I went back in the fall of 1941, it was feeling the pinch of a manpower shortage." Within days of establishing the service on July 31, 1942, three British Wrens on loan to Canada had travelled across the country to recruit what would become the nucleus of the service.

By the end of August, the first class of 67 Wrens entered basic training in residential quarters in Ottawa. Upon completion of

the course, 22 of these recruits became naval officers, the first women to hold this rank in the British Empire.

Carter, who in 1945 won a British Empire Medal for meritorious service, was one of the first Wrens sent to secure wireless telegraphy stations scattered along the East Coast. Some of these posts were to withstand that attack by Nazi U-boats was a very real possibility. Audrey Jamieson, now 78, and Frances Mills, now 92, were two of some 50 Wrens who lived through at least one such terrifying night in late 1944 on Nova Scotia's Atlantic coast. "Our building was very close to the shore," recalls Jamieson, then 20. "We were at our cockleboxes

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when the two male technicians who ran the generator came in, told us there was a U-boat alert and set up a flare gun and several flash guns on the floor pointed toward the back door. They asked if we knew how to use them and, even more importantly, if we knew how to set off the dynamite that was positioned next to the oars in which we sat with the equipment." As it turned out, there was no enemy lurking, but 60 years later Millar's voice still sounds a military note when she recalls: "Our oars were simple: Blow up the equipment first. Getting out was secondary."

The exigencies of war meant that very young women were sent overseas to serve in highly secretive positions. Among them was Tish Millar of Ottawa, who in 1944 went to Newfoundland (then a British colony) where she served as a plotter in the Combined (Air Force/Navy) Operations Centre, three stories below an unassuming building in St. John's. "Looking back, I can't believe how much responsibility they gave us girls. We were 20, 21, 22, and there we were, delegating with ever-changing bearings, speeds and positions of our ships and the U-boats, climbing up and down the ladders, changing the placements of the push-pins and colored strings that told where we believed our ships were and where the U-boats were."

The Wrens who served in the Newfoundland capital lived a more normal life than did those who served at the isolated

stations. "But," recalls Millar, "everything we did was secret. We could not tell anyone—and we never discussed what we were doing. No matter what we saw down there, when we left the operations centre, we had to have a smile on our face."

Among the 500 Wrens who served in England were Jerry Pike of Victoria and Blanche Land of Toronto, who vividly remembers the V-2 attacks on London of late 1944 and 1945. "One rocket exploded when it hit a barrage balloon [a large tethered balloon strung to block the V-2] above the theatre we were playing in," recalls Land, who together with her husband and professional dance partner and choreographer Alan performed in *Never the Navy*, a successful wartime variety production praised by such luminaries as Noel Coward and Rex Harrison.

A dramatic technician before she joined the Wrens, Pike slept in the basement of the Canadian naval mission in London to avoid the bombing. Late on June 7th, 1944, in her dormitory, she became one of the first to see pictures taken by Navy photographers of Canadian landing the day before—D-Day—at June Beach. "It was thrilling to see, after five years of war, the beginning of the liberation of Europe," recalls Pike, who now lives in Victoria. "I can still feel the pride of having been there and getting the photographs out by airphoto to the Navy." Those very photos were transmitted to newspapers in



Land (center, back row) and her dancer husband Alan (second row) in London to perform in the successful *Never the Navy*.



Canada and used by naval intelligence.

By 1943, the Wren had become so vital to the war effort that the government launched a PR campaign to "overcome the tradition that women's place is exclusively in the home... or at least not in military uniforms." A confidential memo issued by the Wartime Information Board in March, 1943, advised that recruitment material aimed at women should appeal to patriotism and avoid using "any" advertising that put the decision to enlist on the same level as choosing a hat. It should also "emphasize the fact that... only the Wrens, with their medieval view of women's place, exclude them from participating in the services."

For years after the war, when Elsa Lezard, who used to listen for U-boat transmissions that were always preceded by a collie tail signal, heard her sister letta tell she'd sold for paper and pen, ready to copy down another Morse code broadcast: "In the years I was at Cowville [a secret listening post outside Moncton, N.B.], I must have copied down scores of messages to and from U-boats and sent them on to the Targona code breakers. Many were important, but none more so than when we scooped the world after intercepting the message Admiral Dönitz sent to his first unassuming Adolf Hitler's death. It had been a long war, and we were all very proud of the role we played for our country."



SOUP-KITCHEN SAGE

He was a homeless alcoholic. But his funeral showed he touched many lives.

I ATTENDED a funeral service recently. Kind words, a companion, chapel overflowing. Speeches by lawyers, government workers, friends, all speaking of the deceased's kindness, his brilliance in mathematics, his ability to write. Edgar Allan Poe at times, his love of Scotch and chess, his great humility and compassion (read: autism, but none of human).

Not so unusual. Except this service was for a homeless man living at the Shepherds of Good Hope soup kitchen and shelter in Ottawa, part of its decan program for alcoholics. Ken Coynne, who died at 53, had touched all these people. His gentlemanly manners attracted them. His relaxed manner put them at ease, even when he was falling down drunk, his face out, arms brawn.

Sometimes people like Ken suffer from successful happen or profession only in the earth of life they're dead. Life dead. Ken a brilliant but tough hand, he didn't want always a good player. Born in St. Catharines, Ont., he was the son of two alcoholics. He even married an alcoholic, who died young; they had a son who was raised by his grandparents. Ken tried college, but the booze always got in the way. He'd had good jobs, as a land surveyor and landscaper, but didn't keep them.

While volunteering at the Shepherds during a sober period—Ken always wanted to give something back—he met Trish, a teacher and volunteer who saw potential in him. He was a handsome figure, over six feet, with a football player frame. They became good friends, then lovers.

On their first date, she told her he was an alcoholic, but she didn't really understand what that meant. Early in the relationship, she went away for a weekend, giving her car keys to Ken. On her return she waited at the station for him. He never came. Trish didn't know what to do, so she phoned the Shepherds, and with police help located her car. She opened the door. The back seat was covered in empty beer

bottles. In strong terms, on the floor, were two teddy bears, a large one hugging a little one. Ken had planned to give them to Trish to welcome her home. Instead, he was dying out at the Shepherds table.

Episodes like this quickly educated Trish about the life of an alcoholic. The relationship lasted a few years, but she finally couldn't compete with the bottle. Once, after she left him for good, she was eating breakfast in her regular restaurant when he appeared. She said he could sit down as long as he wasn't drunk. He sat down—and soon passed out. She and others had to haul him to her car so she could drive him back to the shelter. He had told her once that he didn't even like the taste of alcohol.

Yet when sober, he was wonderfully warm, funny, social, his intelligence always evident. He liked mathematics—anyone with a "number problem" would ask Ken. He was interested in physics, curious about those things, *especially* was his TV favourite. He could recite *The Raven* by rote. Words and wordplay delighted him, especially crossword puzzles. But he scarcely

couldn't afford a paper, so people saved them for him; his pockets were stuffed with torn-out puzzles.

Then Ken, through volunteering, as did most attending the service. A volunteer's right of passage is being delegated to the "soup table," the clean-up area for dishes at madisons. With 500 to 400 clients coming through in the space of an hour, the soup table must operate like a Swiss watch. Ken ran it like a four-star general. He was calm and disciplined, while treating people as people. He'd tell funny stories or enter into philosophical discussions with volunteers as cups and forks flew through the air. At times he'd break into song, usually the Enery Brothers or the Hollies. The soup table, being the last stop before clients left, gave Ken a chance to wish them well—charming, positive, a sort of soup-kitchen *café*.

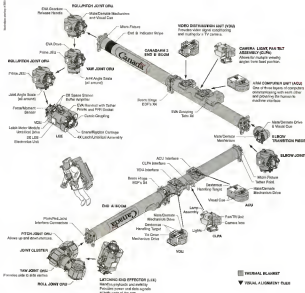
Above a statue in the shelter hangs a duck painting parodying a soup-kitchen lineup with a halved person in the middle of it, explaining there can be saints and angels among us. One learns these of the potential of human beings, the stored-life resilience of the human spirit, the need for love in the human heart.

The full chapel revealed how many lives Ken Coynne had affected, even while coming on the bottom rung. His accomplishments didn't change society. He didn't win awards, or hold high office. Chances were his accomplishment: He knew he was fighting a losing battle, but that didn't stop him from being a good, kind, honest person, trying to help others.

For me, the service brought home the fact that without organizations like the Shepherds of Good Hope (so aptly named), people like Ken wouldn't have hope. The Shepherds give him a guiding hand, a somewhat stable life, dignity and friends. That emotional funeral made me realize we're all part of the human family, and it's our duty to look out for the other.

The background music at Ken's service was an instrumental version of *My Heart Will Go On*, the love theme from *Titanic*. Trish was wrong behind me. If I had chosen the music, though, it might have been *Be Not Proud, My Brother*. The road, indeed, can be long.

Douglas Cornwell is an Ottawa writer. To contact him, write to you@maclean.ca.



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PROFILES IN COURAGE

At Camp Oochigeas, young cancer survivors show what they're made of

WE'RE CHILLIN' at the local ice cream shop in Breckenridge, in the heart of Ontario's cottage country. It's a hot summer evening, and our big night's off from camp. The tacky yellow bowling shirts we've dug out from the drama room. Tie-die tank make heads turn. A local in the shop asks us where we're from. "Camp Oochigeas," answers Dawson, a 17-year-old in the group. "It's a camp for kids with cancer."

The guy is in awe. The team introduces themselves, rhymer off the types of cancer they have fought. In Dawson's case it was leukemia. Tyler batted Bardick's lyrical

poems. For Fraser it was living's soccer. Den had rheumatoid arthritis and Lindsay had Hodgkin's disease. The stranger asks what my diagnosis was. I reluctantly admit that I'm just a staff volunteer, that I've never had cancer. For a moment, I have cancer envy.

I want to tell him about my spinal taps, blood transfusions and radiation, but all I've ever had in my 29 years is an earache. The kids I'm with have gone through a trial by fire and come out victorious. They should be my leader rather than the other way around.

Lick my ice cream and drink how hard-

bing it is to be in the presence of super-heroes like these. Almost 200 kids aged six to 18 from all around Ontario make it to Camp Oochigeas every summer. I've spent two weeks there for the past 12 summers, witnessing miraculous achievements that speak volumes about the campers' perseverance and courage. Eight-year-old Joseph has extremely poor mobility due to a brain tumour, and yet he was out on water skis earlier in the week. Likewise, a running dose of chemotherapy didn't stop 10-year-old Chris from scrambling to the top of a rock wall. As for all our campers, campfires are about burned marshmallows

burning from a campfire; a group of teens paddle back to camp after a three-day canoe trip (top right); Justin and Chris harness up for a wall climb (right); Tim has his first taste of sailing, good friends Fraser and Lindsay on a sea kayaking trip

and melted chocolate, and 16-year-old Dan didn't let his needle from the nurse stop him from an overnight outing. These kids have their priorities in order.

The camp motto is, "You've only failed if you've failed to try." I'd seen a great example of this on the sailing docks earlier in the day. It was extremely windy, and it was the last opportunity of the summer for the Intermediate Boys class to get out on a Laser. Tim showed up in sweatpants and jacket—not the best choice of attire with everyone else in bathing suits. Tim has Dawson's syndrome and leukemia, a double whammy that would convince many adults to just keep him safely on the sidelines. But with some encouragement, we got Tim out on the water—and he loved it. He held onto the mast and made noises like an elephant on safari. And when the wind died down, he blew on the sails to make us go faster again. Oochigeas lets kids be kids again, not just cancer patients.

When you think about it, the chances of getting cancer in childhood are similar to winning a lottery. Perhaps one in 100,000 for Hodgkin's disease, one in over 200,000 for rheumatoid arthritis. And here I am in the ice cream shop with lucky Tim Fraser. They all have stories that could be a made-for-TV movie. I've been a camp with Fraser since 1995, when she was a nine-year-old with little hair on her head. She had cancer in her thigh bone and the doctors planned to amputate her leg. Then a surgeon in Portland, Ore., proposed an option for restoring her leg with a steady and lengthy operation. A massive fundraising effort by her neighbours in Breckenridge, Ont., and many cross-country plane rides later, Fraser was on the road to recovery.

It was an experience she would not want on anyone else, yet she shows no resentment over the odds she was dealt. She can even put a positive spin on it. "Cancer gave me a chance to see how precious life really is," Fraser says. "It gave me a chance to experience things that not many people get to experience—like Camp Oochigeas."



FAST CARS, QUICK WITS

For a winning edge, racers tune their heads

IT TAKES GREAT CARS to win on the world's top racing circuits. Just ask Jacques Villeneuve, who captured a Formula One championship with a good team and now struggles just to finish races with a bad one. But the car is not the only component required for success on the track. The best drivers have to be great athletes because piloting a 1,000-hp power, open-wheeled rocket during a race is like waging a two-hour fist fight in a smothering-hot phone booth. Player's Racing's Patrick Carpentier, who will compete in the CART FedEx Championship Series in Montreal this weekend, says he has lost as much as 2.25 kg in a single, sweaty race. On winding tracks, his heart pounds at 160 beats per minute for two hours, and the effort to steer the car through the course can leave his hands blistered and raw.

And it's not just physical. Drivers also need mental strength and agility to succeed on the track. They must make good, quick decisions—about when to brake, when to pass, when to take risks—and they have to maintain intense concentration for prolonged periods. At speeds up to 400 km/h, even the tiniest misjudgment can be the difference between winning and losing, not to mention staying alive. “If you don’t train the brain,” says Carpentier, “it won’t respond the way you want it to, when you need it the most.”

So in addition to the hours drivers spend on the track testing and improving their cars, they also seek ways to fine-tune their grey matter. And for that, some are turning to Human Performance International Inc. in Huntersville, N.C. It may be in the heart of racetrack country, but HPI is the brainchild of two former McGill University professors, physiologists Jacques Delisle, from Ottawa, Ont., and the late Dan Martz, a psychologist from Saskatoon, who started the company in Montreal in 1983 before moving south in



1992. They devised programs to enhance both physical and mental fitness, and they’ve attracted a clientele that has included some of the world’s top drivers—among them Carpentier, CART Series leader Cristiano da Matta of Brazil, reigning NASCAR champion Jeff Gordon and former F1 champ Nigel Mansell.

To sharpen drivers’ focus, HPI employs a dropcapably simple computer game that it created, called MindShaper. Carpentier, 31, swears by it. To play, the Montreal-born driver selects a skill level, and appears a checkerboard-like grid, each square filled with a number. Carpentier then trains his piercing blue eyes on the screen, starts the timer and, using the computer mouse and pointer in a race against the clock, rapidly clicks on the randomly positioned numbers in ascending order until they’ve all been pinpointed. The mental discipline required to play the game well, says Carpentier, is the same as in racing. “Concentrate on what a lot of people think, the mind can only process one thing at a time,” says Carpentier. “If you really set your mind on something, you can have good success.”

Just as car manufacturers eventually use the technologies developed for high-performance racing to enhance the family sedan, HPI has begun to discover that its mind-sharpening techniques may have uses off the track. Pro golfers, who need to stay focused during five-hour tournament rounds, see a natural fit with HPI. And some business executives see

Carpentier does exercises to ensure his brain works “when you need it the most”

using HPI for mental tune-ups.

Typically, all track teams find out about HPI through connections in racing, and they generally want two things. “The first one is, ‘Show me how to be confident when things are not going well,’” says Delisle. “And the second element is, ‘Show me how to focus better, and when I lose my focus, how to get it back effectively.’” Without giving away specific techniques, Delisle suggests part of maintaining confidence is straightforward sports psychology: give 100 per cent effort all the time, and don’t get tripping on performance outcomes, like winning a race or leading a new account, because results depend on too many variables outside a person’s control.

For focus, most clients use MindShaper Ray Urrutia, who owns a small communications company in Chicago, discovered the program two years ago when he did some coaching for HPI. He tried it and says he saw almost immediate benefits in his ability to focus on his tasks. Now, Urrutia has his entire management team “playing” the game. “I still work long hours,” says Urrutia, “but MindShaper allows me to get more done, manage more projects.” And at business, that’s as good as a checkered flag.

View more of Peter Dinklage’s photos from the Toronto-Montreal Indy series: www.macleans.ca

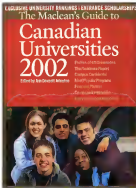
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Film | BRIAN D. JOHNSON



KODACHROME MOMENTS

A psycho stalks the perfect picture, and a surfer girl walks the perfect wave

MOVIES LOVE to assign psychos lurking in occupations that have romantic access to our lives: The psychiatrist, the gynecologist, the babysitter, the cable guy... the motel manager. *One Hour Photo* has a premise so obvious it's remarkable that it hasn't popped up until now: What if the man who develops your snapshots takes a creepy interest in them?

By (Robin Williams) is a lonely reclus who works at the photo counter of a big-box store called Summit. He's just snooty or doped in a consumer wasteland, but he devotes a jeweler's eye to his work and unwitting attention to his customers—especially the Yorkins family. *Sy* has been processing the Yorkins' photos for 11 years. What they don't know is that he always makes an extra set for himself. Sam (Connie Nielsen), Will (Michael Vartan) and their nine-year-old boy, Jacob (Dylan Scott) are the picture-perfect family *Sy* never had, and their emphasis now covers an entire wall of his apartment.

The narrative is framed in white, beginning and ending in a stark interrogation room, where *Sy* is being held for a shocking crime. As we watch the picture develop, we think we know exactly how it will turn out. At one point *Sy* quotes from a book by self-help guru Deepak Chopra: "The things we fear the most have already happened to us." That's the mechanism of this precise, elegant thriller, a staffer dreads in which viewer and voyeur share the same claustrophobic aperture. *One Hour Photo* plays on the basic fear underlying America's parian morality—search a comfortable life and you'll find a nasty secret that's enough to turn stone marble into an weeping angel. And it's not giving anything away to say that, in this case, the secret is adultery. We can see it coming long before *Sy* discovers the damning evidence on a roll of film.

While the plot's template is conventional, the movie's style is useful and ingenious. Its writer-director, American master

cinema ace Mark Romanek, constructs an eerie visual dream out of the photo-processing metaphor. He shoots the Yorkins' affluent home life as a Kodachrome fantasy of pastel-rich colors. By contrast, *Sy* occupies an overexposed world of whites and blanchard greys. He drives a white limo. And his apartment location is so monochromatic that even the bottle of fish soap by the sink is colorless.

Such schematic art direction defies realism, but it's effective, attractive and, as a projection of *Sy*'s psychosis, forgivable. Romanek's script, however, is also awfully on-the-nose. *Sy* narrates the movie with an omniscient wisdom strictly at odds with his jittery persona onscreen. The plot has some lazy loopholes—fired employees don't get to finish out the week and go postal. And by spelling out *Sy*'s motivations at the very end, we get a gloss finish when more would be more in keeping with the rest of the picture. But *One Hour Photo* is curiously compelling. And Williams turns in a crisp, subtly calibrated performance. First Grade to Sevensky.

then *Beverly Hills*, now this—he seems to have found the evil twin to his comic genius. As if atoning for his various crimes of sentimental excess, the sad clown is letting his dark side come into focus with chilling resolution. You might say that he's on a roll.

THERE'S NOTHING sadder about *Blue Crush*, unless you're the type to be spoiled by a soft-core feminist tale of cute girls in bikinis riding through monster waves in Hawaii. But this is another movie that runs a cut above formula. Ever since *The Endless Summer* (1966), surfing has been one of the more mesmerizing sports to watch on the big screen. And the surfing footage in *Blue Crush* is breath-taking. This is an action movie that doesn't rely on special effects. The waves are real, scary and strangely moving.

Between the wave sets, a predictably carry story unfolds on dry land, but it's more tolerable than you might expect. Anne Marie (Kate Bosworth) leads a trio of surfer girls trying to make a splash in a male-dominated sport. Working as models at a luxury hotel, they join their legs at Anne Marie's entry in the Pipe Masters surf competition. But when she falls for a winning pro football quarterback (Matthew Davis), Surfer Girl threatens to turn into Bland Barbie princess. Against a wall of cliché, Bosworth cuts a credible figure, both acting and surfing. **B**



As a photo-shop fiend, Williams finds his most delicious in a sharply focused performance

Illustration by Bob Schuchman for EW.com

NOVEMBER 11 / AUGUST 28, 2002 41

Film | Jennifer Aniston is the good—and really, really tired—girl

Jennifer Aniston yaks, "What part of Russia are you from?" she means Canada, but she's tired. This is the last interview of the day for Mike White, *Mike White* and *Aniston*—respectively the writer, director and star of *The Good Girl*. Aniston's eyes are glassed over, Aniston can't stop yawning and White catches himself dozing off. They apologize for their lack of concentration. But they seem to know you'll cut them a little slack because their movie is so damn good.

Aniston plays Justine Law, a 30-year-old Texas who's childless. She works at the Rascal Rodeo and is married to a poethead, *White*. Justine meets Holden (Jake Gyllenhaal) she says to him, "I see you hate the world and so do I." There is a passionate affair, grounded in alienation and disaffection. But it's ultimately doomed. And *The Good Girl* is a fascinating study of the emotional and harmful decisions people make while trying not to hurt others.

Aniston, 33, is terrific in the role—which calls for absurd humour and painful realism. And don't be surprised. She's been completely at ease and entrancing in films like *Rock Star*, *The Ghost of My Affection* and *Office Space*. There's no reason to believe she can't handle something weightier. But because many critics have unfairly claimed that all of her film roles are a variation on her *Friends* persona Rachel Green, Aniston admits even she doubted whether she could do Justice Jones.

Take out, although she doesn't need it to play Rachel, Aniston does have the requisite vulnerability. "I'm a child of divorce," she says, "I was living right in the middle—didn't want to hurt anyone's feelings. So sometimes you tell white lies and while lies don't hurt and you end up digging yourself deeper and deeper into black holes. I understand that need to be the good sweet girl."

She even relaxes to Justine's marital frustrations. "Just having such a connec-

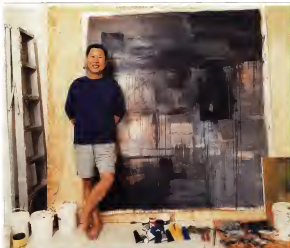
tion," says Mr. Final Post, "and then such a lack of connection." That's as close as she comes to talking about *Fit*. Aniston's not here to answer questions about *Friends* or her personal life, and her 300-lb. bodyguard places herself strategically behind interviewers, literally breathing down their necks, as a reminder.

Of course you can ask *White* and *Aniston* whatever you want. Just don't expect an enthusiastic answer. *The Good Girl* is a much more accessible film than their last collaboration, *Crash & Burn*, about a childhood friendship that warps into adult obsession. "The characters Mike writes are misjudged in foolish ways," says Aniston. "But you can say I've been there, I've done that and it's a relief to laugh." Even with the humour, *The Good Girl* can leave you depressed for days. And while it's impressive that Aniston pulled it off, it's a relief to turn on the TV and find Rachel.

SHANDA BEER



When Aniston and Aniston is never makes you laugh and leaves you depressed for days



Art | Shanghai showing

Stepping out of the shadow of contemporary-style conformity for the first time in decades, Shanghai is poised to reclaim its role as the Paris of the Orient. The skyline now combines Hong Kong's, and the streets buzz with a cosmopolitan energy not felt there since its heyday in the 1920s and '30s. This fall, a group of Canadian abstract and figurative artists is contributing something to the new anthology of 80 original works for the Shanghai Art Museum, called *Painters II*—running from Aug. 29 to Sept. 13. The name is a deliberate nod to a groundbreaking order of Toronto artists from the 1950s and '60s known as the Painters II. For co-curator David Urban, 35, it's an opportunity to introduce a whole new audience to some of Canada's best contemporary art. For

one of the artists, Shanghai-born Liu Jian, it's a chance to show his hometown just how far he has come since his days of painting propaganda posters for the military of defiance.

Born in 1965, Liu grew up during China's notorious Cultural Revolution, and the sister of current Hong Kong chief executive Tung Chee-hwa—and was invited to show his paintings at her gallery, Asian Fine Arts. Serving foot outside mainland China for the first time, Liu can't lay eyes toward square posters. After the Tiananmen Square protests in 1989, he moved to Toronto, where he now lives with his wife and young daughter. "I came here not just for a better life, but to learn something from the West," he says. "And now I'm going back to my home country as a successful artist, accompanied by all these great Canadian painters." Call it a continental hand revolution.

Liu Jian: went from propaganda posters in China to abstract art in Canada.

David Urban: an influential consultant for collectors of contemporary Chinese art and the sister of current Hong Kong chief executive Tung Chee-hwa—and was invited to show his paintings at her gallery, Asian Fine Arts. Serving foot outside mainland China for the first time, Liu can't lay eyes toward square posters. After the Tiananmen Square protests in 1989, he moved to Toronto, where he now lives with his wife and young daughter. "I came here not just for a better life, but to learn something from the West," he says. "And now I'm going back to my home country as a successful artist, accompanied by all these great Canadian painters." Call it a continental hand revolution.

DAVID WAGNER

BESTSELLERS

Fiction

	LAST WEEK	WEEKS ON CHART
1. THE HARRY POTTER SERIES (J.K. Rowling)	1	1
2. THE GIVER (Lois Lowry)	2	2
3. THE HARRY POTTER SERIES (J.K. Rowling)	3	3
4. THE HARRY POTTER SERIES (J.K. Rowling)	4	4
5. THE HARRY POTTER SERIES (J.K. Rowling)	5	5
6. THE HARRY POTTER SERIES (J.K. Rowling)	6	6
7. THE HARRY POTTER SERIES (J.K. Rowling)	7	7
8. THE HARRY POTTER SERIES (J.K. Rowling)	8	8
9. THE HARRY POTTER SERIES (J.K. Rowling)	9	9
10. THE HARRY POTTER SERIES (J.K. Rowling)	10	10

Nonfiction

	LAST WEEK	WEEKS ON CHART
1. THE HARRY POTTER SERIES (J.K. Rowling)	1	1
2. THE HARRY POTTER SERIES (J.K. Rowling)	2	2
3. THE HARRY POTTER SERIES (J.K. Rowling)	3	3
4. THE HARRY POTTER SERIES (J.K. Rowling)	4	4
5. THE HARRY POTTER SERIES (J.K. Rowling)	5	5
6. THE HARRY POTTER SERIES (J.K. Rowling)	6	6
7. THE HARRY POTTER SERIES (J.K. Rowling)	7	7
8. THE HARRY POTTER SERIES (J.K. Rowling)	8	8
9. THE HARRY POTTER SERIES (J.K. Rowling)	9	9
10. THE HARRY POTTER SERIES (J.K. Rowling)	10	10

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SOUTHERN (DIS)COMFORT

On the eve of a U.S. stint, our Ottawa editor reflects on life there—and here

AFTER LIVING my entire life in Canada, the off for a nine-month stint in the United States I'd like to boast that I had south unforded by any nasty anti-American sentiments—but videotape evidence might surface to prove the vice.

That type, if it exists, is a painting shot of the stands on Sept. 8, 1996 at Ottawa's Canal Centre, during the United States-Brazil hockey World Cup semifinal. There I was, high in the cheap seats, cheering on the Russians like most of the crowd, and... I'm ashamed to confess—lustily jolting in with the "make, make" chant whenever Brett Hull goes near the puck.

Why did I beg a terrific score who grew up in Canada and who is, besides, son of Canadian icon Bobby Hull? Because he lead up for the final. Never mind that he joined the U.S. squad only after being passed over for Team Canada back in 1988. Because, because.

So I had an America-phobic episode, while Team USA beat the Russians 5-2 that night. What else is new? Americanism is warner. That's what makes going there so awkward, so logical—used to grace a transgression to a certain kind of Canada. My kind, it seems. We're hypersensitive to anything that looks like capitulation. This occasionally sets off obsession behaviour, such as the tarring of an example of brownnata.

More often, our defensiveness manifests itself as aggressively xenophobic, it's even disguised as friendship. Take last fall's "Canada Loves New York" week end, which I attended. The plan was for thousands of Canadians to flood into Manhattan to show support post-Sept. 11. What I witnessed, though, was more like "Canada Loves Canada for Loving New York" celebration. Canadians waved and wore the Maple Leaf, belted out O Canada—twice—and repeatedly congratulated each other for being there. What site neighbours were. They're lucky to have us.

The gesture would have been more

touching if we had swapped overalls in the Stars and Stripes, and stuck to telling the Americans what great neighbours they are. Sadly, we didn't. Then at Ground Zero—surely a place to accede to American passion—Canadian visitors seemed driven to insert their *liberty* even as they paid their respects. Along with messages of condolence attached to security barriers were several Canadian flags. I watched a young woman take one out of her purse and drape it over her shoulder as she walked up to the pit. The gesture embarrassed me. I know its source: we got reaction to any evidence of American pride or prowess to declare our difference.

These declarations aren't necessarily more rational when stripped of flag-waving jargon. Let's say Canada strikes a stance at the UN that puts us at odds with the U.S. How much of the favourable domestic reaction is based on a grip of foreign policy, and how much on glitz at revealing Washington? Consider: a Canadian bookstore browser's decision to pick up *Cleopatra* before *The Car*



Antony is first because of an expectation that a prize-winning Canadian novel will be more satisfying than an equally excellent American book, or out of bias in favour of the homegrown.

Though Canadian nationalism will object at this point, strictly supporting Canadian literature and foreign policy shouldn't be lumped in with irrational expressions of resentment toward the U.S. Enlightened voters tell us that being pro-Canada must be distinguished from being anti-American. In *Native Ground*, his book on Canada's U.S.-bashing heritage, historian Jack Granatstein declares that we're "illegally suppressing our relative anti-Americanism."

How difficult. How unlikely. A country isn't about reasoned choices alone. For every intelligent argument about, say, government vs. private health insurance, there's one of the three-down vs. four-down football victory. And to those Canadians who prefer four-down, I say... tractor, tractor.

Saying Canada is not entirely a matter of what really matters. Many national differences are trivial. They're about songs, regional accents, the content of beer. We cherish them anyway. They sustain us in the long intervals between moments when we're reminded of the deeper reasons reason states out. Douglas Coupland's new picture book *Southern of Canada* delights because it reveals to the seemingly inconsequential images of national identity—like the profile of a beer bottle (Stability) or on a postage stamp (the Queen, also stability). America's products, dogmas and orientations are all around us. Coupland sees how that makes us drag all the more longingly to our own pop ephemera.

Nobody can be thinking all the time. Our rejection of some aspects of the American Way gets tangled up with everyday reactions that aren't always pretty. I'll stifle those uniforms, as best I can, while in the States. It shouldn't be hard most of the time, I like American and admire America. And if, when I return, that admiration has grown beyond acceptable Canadian limits, I know the home crowd will be quick to let me know about it. ■

John Giddens will attend Harvard University as a Fulbright Fellowship. jgiddens@interq.ca

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